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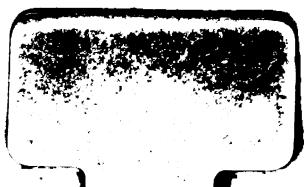
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A
COMMENTARY
ON
THE VISION
OF
Z E C H A R I A H
THE PROPHET;

WITH A
CORRECTED TRANSLATION AND CRITICAL NOTES.



BY THE
REV. JOHN STONARD, D. D.
RECTOR OF ALDINGHAM, LANCASHIRE.

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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM,
EARL OF LONSDALE.

MY LORD,

IF ever I could have occasion to put to you the question of St. Paul to Herod Agrippa, "Believest thou the prophets?" it must be only to answer for your Lordship, as the apostle did for the Jewish king, "I know that thou believest." Educated by the care of your learned and pious relative, whose studies took so decided a direction to prophetic subjects, "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,"

you have ever, amidst all the cares, the pleasures, and the splendours of greatness, retained uneffaced and unimpaired, your early impressions concerning the great charter of salvation, and concerning the powerful and decisive testimony, which the spirit of prophecy bears to its authenticity and its validity. For this reason it is, that I have craved permission to have the honour of thus prefixing your Lordship's name to a volume intended to expand and elucidate an obscure portion of the divine oracles ; the germ, as it were, and convolved substance of those mystic scenes, which were afterwards drawn out in fuller and distincter view to the rapt sense, and have been described to us by "the warning voice, of him, who saw th' Apocalypse."

You, my Lord, will feel no displeasure on being reminded, "that to the great the consolations of religion are as necessary as its instructions." You have paid your contingent to the contributions levied on mortality, in sustaining some of the rudest of those "thousand shocks, which flesh is heir to." Your Lordship knows

DEDICATION.

and feels, that these, under the divine blessing, are the appointed means of invigorating, as well as trying, christian constancy; while by severing the attention and the affections from things worldly and visible, and warning us, that "we have here no continuing city," they both dispose and direct us to "seek one to come." You are also now arrived at that period of mortal life, in which the retrospect is longer than the prospect: yet, whenever in recollection you tread back the trodden ground, the latter opens to your Lordship the brighter scene. Strengthened by so many prophetic declarations, promises, types, and visions, your eye of faith stops not at the precincts of the dark valley, but piercing all across and far beyond it, even "to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills," reposes on the mansions, where perfection and bliss dwell with immortality. That your Lordship may yet continue for many years to come, to "fight the good fight and to keep the faith," until having finished your course, you fall asleep in that Euthanasia, to which christians, though not apostles, may

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DEDICATION

look forward, in the proportion of their humble
order, with apostolic hopes and feelings, is the
sincere desire and the hearty prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obliged,
gratèful, and obedient servant,

JOHN STONARD.

ALDINGHAM;

January 20th, 1824.

PREFACE.

THE vision of Zechariah is an entirely separate and independent portion of his book, with the posterior part of which it has even less connexion, than with some other prophetic parts of scripture. He has not only recorded its particular date, but he has dated also the two revelations, which immediately precede and follow it; and since he has neglected that note of time in his subsequent predictions, we may in all reason presume, that he intended to discriminate this part of his prophecy by a peculiar mark, if not of eminence, at least of distinction, from the rest. Zechariah's vision was, like that of St. John, the revelation of a single night; and therein the deep designs of the divine providence, in ordering the events of futurity, were communicated to the prophet by a mode of spiritual influence quite different from any, under which the succeeding oracles were given, and by the medium of symbolical representations, which were in no other instance made the vehicles of revelation to him. In the opinion of some critics the distinction has descended even to his style; so that I consider myself fully justified in treating this vision, as an independent prophecy, not less dis-

tinct from the remainder of Zechariah's volume, than from the predictions delivered by any other prophet.

The narrative is contained in a small compass, occupying no more than seventy seven verses, which extend from the eighth verse of the first chapter to the end of the sixth. But though a short, it is an highly interesting portion of holy writ, evidently including much, that meets not the simple apprehension, and more, than has yet been unfolded to studious observation. I do not doubt therefore, that a commentary upon it will be acceptable to those, who are disposed to search the prophetic parts of the sacred writings.

But few and imperfect attempts have been hitherto made towards the elucidation of this vision in our native language. The work of Archbishop Newcome on the minor prophets in general, and that of Dr. Blaney, though limited to the prophecy of Zechariah in particular, are rather critical than explanatory; and, as I think, fall far short of conveying to the mind of the reader that satisfaction, which can be afforded only by a comprehensive view of the whole prophetic drama, as it is collected from a distinct apprehension of its several scenes, representing the events of futurity in connected succession. To the translation and annotations

however of those two learned persons I have felt myself bound to pay diligent attention, but especially to those of the latter, because he professedly follows in the track of the Archbishop, intending only to supply deficiencies, to correct errors and to defend some variations from the authorized version, to which strong objections had been made. His eminent character also, as an Hebrew critic, and more especially the circumstance of his having singled out the prophecy of Zechariah, from the circle of the minor prophets, for the subject of a separate publication, to which he had of course devoted a more than common portion of his thoughts and labour, have bound me to the application of serious and repeated consideration, before I could venture to record my dissent from him, and have also induced me to state the reasons for my dissent, at least in all such instances, as are of any importance. Unfortunately the points of difference have turned out to be more numerous, and the differences wider, than could have been wished: but I trust it will be found in every such instance, that I have not failed of the respect due to the abilities and attainments of the learned professor, especially from one, who is conscious of having no pretensions to compare with him in

a critical knowledge of the Hebrew tongue, and of being indebted for much of what he has, to the advantage of having in early life attended his lectures.

The renderings of Dr. Blaney, which I have controverted, (for except where the translation is concerned, I have rarely, if ever, found it necessary to enter into any length of discussion,) are, for the most part, those, in which he also has departed from our authorized English version; and many of those deviations are the result of correspondent various readings, which he has received into the Hebrew text. Of these some rest on very slight authority, and none, as it appears to me, on grounds sufficient to support them. So far therefore from thinking it allowable to follow him therein, I have felt myself bound by duty to oppose those innovations. Except in a single instance*, in which also our translators have gone before me, I have strictly adhered to the printed copy of Van der Hooght. For although I am far from maintaining the absolute integrity of the Hebrew text, a point long since abandoned by all, and am convinced, that it is capable of receiving considerable improvement from the means now in our hands, yet am I

* Cap. iv. 2, where the weight of authority prodigiously preponderates in favour of וְהָיָה instead of וְהָיָה.

fully persuaded, that there cannot be a more serious impediment to the final discovery, or even to the free investigation of the true meaning of holy writ, than the pruriency of conjectural emendation; or, what in its effect is almost equally pernicious, the proneness to admit various readings into the text on slender and inadequate grounds. So little also have I been disposed to stray from our English version, that I have entitled the translation prefixed to my commentary, not a new, but a corrected one*. For although I would not follow with servile timidity, I could not allow myself lightly, and, as I feel, irreverently, to desert that pattern of general excellence, which, if all its real errors were corrected, its deficiencies supplied, and every needful improvement made, would still, as a whole, remain little affected by the changes, that would be thus introduced.

It will appear in some parts of the following pages, that I am accustomed to pay a degree of deference, at least of attention, to the vowel

* It will be found that the version given in my commentary does not always exactly agree with the text of my translation. But the differences are not numerous, nor are they important as to the meaning. Some of them are the consequences of an alteration in my intention, which originally was to print the whole translation in the form of prose, without any regard to a metrical arrangement of the poetical parts. Others are faults, quas incuria fudit, and which, as such, I intreat the reader to pardon.

points. At the same time, I am not to be reckoned with those, whom Bishop Horsley, with somewhat too much of contempt, stigmatizes, as "worshippers of the Masorites." Their system of punctuation bears evident marks of having been formed and settled at a period long after the decease of the latest of the inspired penmen, and of having been contrived, if not merely, yet chiefly, for the purpose of forming a perpetual commentary on the sacred volume, which it limits and binds down by such numerous and complicated, such firm and positive rules, as could never have been fastened on any book written in a living tongue. Yet is it the work of successive generations of studious men, who were accurately skilled in the Hebrew language, who diligently weighed the force of every word, who preserved many valuable traditions of the sense, in which some less common forms of speech were used, and some difficult passages understood, in times long anterior to the schools of Tiberias, and who have handed down to us, taken at the lowest estimation and with all its defects, an highly valuable commentary on the old testament; to which even those, who most affect to despise it, are under no slight obligations. As such I willingly receive it: but far from being bound by the indissoluble chain of tradition, or hemmed in by the insurmountable

hedge of the law*, I have made no scruple of deserting its guidance, whenever I have seemed to detect error, or to discern the means of correction and improvement; I have expatiated, so to speak, "in the liberty, with which Christ hath made me free."

Archbishop Newcome and Dr. Blaney have arranged a considerable portion of the vision in the form of metre. Therein I have followed them, notwithstanding the opinion of Bishop Horsley, that in the prophets "the attempt is too much for modern criticism†." But upon this subject I desire to refer the reader to the work of Bishop Jebb on "Sacred Literature‡;" a work, which, if it could need any praise of mine, I should commend, as not less elegant and entertaining, than ingenious and learned. I have also printed in a metrical form some passages, which both Archbishop Newcome and Dr. Blaney have regarded as prose, and some, in which the latter has not followed his predecessor. In those texts I consider the poetical character and metrical structure of the lines to be plainly dis-

* The Masora is called by learned Jews ספר תוספתא, the hedge of the law; and some derive the word itself from אסר, to bind, or enchain, the Aleph being dropped in contraction. Buxtorfii Tiberias, cap. 1.

† Preface to Hosea, p. 44. The Bishop is, however, inclined to except Isaiah.

‡ See particularly p. 83.

cornible ; and they also form parts of oracular declarations, which throughout the vision appear to me to be delivered in the language of poetry ; except only, that the tenth, eleventh, and fourteenth verses of the sixth chapter, where the other parts of the oracle require a metrical arrangement, are in prose. But the subject matter of the divine communication is there so truly prosaic, consisting merely in the designation of individuals, by their families and proper names, to a particular office, that it could hardly be adapted to a form of poetry, which does not shew itself in measure properly so called.

The following particulars, briefly explaining the origin, principle, and intention of the volume, may interest the reader, and throw light on some portions of it.

About eighteen months ago, being much engaged in the study of the Revelation of St. John, I found it necessary to enter into a close comparison of several of its figures, with those described in the vision of Zechariah. By such comparison I was soon convinced, that the strong similarity, which subsists between the two Apocalypses, for so I venture to call the one, as well as the other, is not the adventitious result of like subjects falling under like emblems, as like ideas into like modes of expression, but the calculated effect of design studiously connecting

them by such strong marks of conformity, as might, consistently with the different times and circumstances, in which they were delivered, point out their mutual intelligence and general intercommunity. Hence I was induced to lay aside my labours on the mystic scenes exhibited to the prophetic apostle, until I had more fully investigated those recorded by the evangelical prophet.

I did not indeed approach the subject without an opinion previously formed, though not decidedly fixed, as to the interpretation of one important part of the vision*, in which opinion my subsequent enquiries have produced little alteration; but neither did I approach it without a deliberate and steadfast determination to reject every insulated exposition, however fairly it might seem to quadrate with any particular emblem, if it refused to form a link in one regular and consistent chain of interpretation from the beginning to the end of the vision, according to the principles laid down in the introduction to the commentary on the sixth part. Farther than this I was absolutely unfettered by any general or partial opinion, having already discarded, for guides, all the commentaries I had read, as irreducible to the standard just mentioned.

* I allude to the commentary on the fifth part; a portion of which formed the substance of a visitation sermon, preached in the year 1817.

The body of the commentary is intended for, and, if I have been able to execute my own intention, adapted to, the use of the mere English reader. Some few passages may indeed be found relating to grammar and criticism; but the grammar in those cases is universal grammar, and the criticism such, as any intelligent and attentive reader may easily enter into, without possessing any knowledge of the Hebrew tongue. From such subjects of enquiry, if somewhat more difficult and recondite than ordinary, the great body of christians* ought not to be excluded by the pride of learning, and have no right to exclude themselves by those pleas, which indolence and indifference put forward in the guise of modesty. The testimony of "Jesus is the spirit of prophecy:" and to the word of prophecy, which "we now hold far surer," than it was in ancient times, by the satisfactory evidence of its accomplishment, christians, as St. Peter

* Let us hear the manly and energetic language of Bishop Horsley, truly worthy, as it is, of a protestant prelate. "I never will admit," says that great man, "nor will you, (Mr. King,) I think, be inclined to admit, that our religion has belonging to it any secret doctrine, from the hearing of which the illiterate laity are to be excluded. The notion of the incompetence of the common people to understand the whole of the revealed doctrine, and of the danger of expounding the prophecies to them, is false and abominable. It is the very principle upon which the sacred text was, for so many ages, kept under the lock and key of the dead languages. Would to God, say I, that all the Lord's people were prophets." Letter to Edward King, Esq. p. 17.

tells them, "do well," do their duty, when "they take heed." For the light, which in the ages before him, was only as that of "a candle, shining in the dark place" of the human understanding, has been gradually acquiring strength along with the progress of time. It rose upon the apostles and their immediate converts with the brightness of "the day star," ushering in the morning of the sun of righteousness; and now, far from being absorbed in the glories of his day, it attends, and will attend, his never setting course, until it shall "fail," cease, in final completion, together with faith and hope, and all that we know in part, and all the graces and virtues of a mortal state, save that which is immortal, and which "never faileth, charity."

When I began my commentary, I was far from intending to send into the world so large a volume as the reader now holds in his hand. That, which has often happened to others, has occurred to me. It was only in the progress of my labours, that I learned to ascertain their extent. Difficulties were to be removed or surmounted; errors to be refuted; objections to be obviated or anticipated; my own interpretations defended; and particularly the illustrations, which I had to give, were to be exhibited in that length of detail, which their novelty and

indeed their importance called for. Hence also arose the necessary addition of the notes, which are appended to the commentary, and which are submitted to the judgement of the learned. Differing so often, as I have presumed to do, from renowned scholars and divines; far removed too, as I am, from literary counsel and communication, and by necessity confined to the scanty stores of a private library, I have often felt myself "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in, by doubts," which I wanted means to satisfy and by "fears," which were not without difficulty silenced. But I do not mean to bespeak indulgence. I have learned from high authority, that "no book was ever yet spared out of tenderness to the author," and "that the world is little solicitous to know, whence proceeded the faults of that which it condemns." At the same time I can safely declare in the words of the same great master of English literature, that "I deliver it to the world with the spirit of a man, who has endeavoured well;" having kept my eye single, fixed on those high ends, which an interpreter of holy scripture should keep before him; the glory of the most high God in the propagation of the truth, the consequent edification of christians, and, O that God would hear the humble prayer, in the conviction and conversion of the unbelieving and the sinner.

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THE
VISION OF ZECHARIAH.

THE
VISION OF ZECHARIAH.

PART I.

CHAP. 1.

7. Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Sebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of Jehovah unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, the prophet, saying,

8. I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse; and he stood among the myrtle-trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were horses, red, pale, and white.

9. Then said I, "O my Lord, what are these?"

And the angel that talked with me, said unto
10. me, "I will shew thee what these be." And the man that stood among the myrtle-trees answered and said, "These are they, whom Jehovah hath sent to go to and fro through
11. the earth." And they answered the angel of Jehovah, that stood among the myrtle-trees and said, "We have gone to and fro through

- the earth ; and behold all the earth sitteth
12. still and is at rest." Then the angel of Jehovah answered and said, "O Jehovah of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation
13. these seventy years?" And Jehovah answered the angel that talked with me, good
14. words, comfortable words. So the angel that communed with me, said unto me,
"Cry thou, saying,
Thus saith Jehovah of hosts,
I have been jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion
With a great jealousy :
15. And with great anger am I angry
Against the heathen, that are at ease ;
Because I was angry but a little while,
And they have helped forward the affliction.
16. Therefore thus saith Jehovah,
I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies ;
My house shall be built in it,
Saith Jehovah of hosts ;
And the line shall be stretched forth upon
Jerusalem.

17. Cry yet again, saying,
 Thus saith Jehovah of hosts ;
 Yet again shall my cities be dispersed abroad
 through prosperity,
 And Jehovah will yet again comfort Zion,
 And will yet again choose Jerusalem."

PART II.

CHAP. I.

18. Then lifted I up mine eyes and saw, and
 19. behold four horns. And I said unto the an-
 gel that talked with me, "What are these?"
 And he said unto me, "These are the horns
 which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Je-
 20. rusalem." Moreover Jehovah shewed me
 21. four workmen. Then said I, "What come
 these to do?" And he spake, saying, "Those
 are the horns which have scattered Judah, so
 that a man did not lift up his head: but
 these are come to fray them, to cast out
 the horns of the Gentiles, which have lifted
 up the horn over the land of Judah to scat-
 ter it."

PART III.

CHAP. II.

1. Then I lifted up mine eyes and looked ; and
behold a man, and in his hand a measuring
2. line. Then said I, " Whither goest thou ?"
And he said unto me, " To measure Jerusalem,
to see what is the breadth thereof and
3. what the length thereof." And behold the
angel that talked with me, went forth ; and ano-
4. ther angel went out to meet him ; and said un-
to him, " Run, speak to that young man saying,
" As villages shall Jerusalem dwell,
For the multitude of men and of cattle
within her.
5. For I will be unto her, saith Jehovah,
A wall of fire round about,
And will be the glory in the midst of her.
6. Ho ! Ho ! *come forth and flee*
From the land of the north, saith Jehovah :
For as the four winds of heaven
Have I spread you abroad, saith Jehovah.
7. Ho Zion ! deliver thyself,
Thou, that inhabitest the daughter of
Babylon.

ZECHARIAH.

8. For thus saith Jehovah of hosts,
After the glory hath he sent me
Unto the nations, which spoil you.
For he, that toucheth you,
Toucheth the apple of his own eye.
9. For behold I shake my hand over them,
And they shall become a spoil to their
servants;
And ye shall know, that Jehovah of hosts
hath sent me.
10. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion,
For lo! I come,
And will dwell in the midst of thee, saith
Jehovah.
11. And many nations shall be joined
Unto Jehovah in that day,
And shall be my people;
And I will dwell in the midst of thee;
And thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts
hath sent me unto thee.
12. So Jehovah shall inherit Judah,
His portion in the holy land,
And shall yet again choose Jerusalem.

13. Be silent, O all flesh, before Jehovah,
For he is roused up from his holy habitation."

PART IV.

CHAP. III.

1. And he shewed me Joshua the high-priest standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.
2. And Jehovah said unto Satan,
"Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan,
Even Jehovah rebuke thee,
He, that chooseth Jerusalem.
Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"
3. Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those, that stood before him, saying, "Take away those filthy garments from him," And unto him he said, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass away from thee, and have clothed thee
5. with change of raiment, and have said, let them set a clean turband on his head." So they set the clean turband on his head and

clothed him with the garments. Then the
6. angel of Jehovah stood; and the angel of
Jehovah testified unto Joshua, saying,

7. "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts;

If in my ways thou wilt walk,

And if my charge thou wilt keep,

Then thou shalt also judge my house;

And shalt also keep my courts;

And I will also give thee ministers

Among these that are standing.

8. Hear now, O Joshua, the high-priest,

Thou and thy fellows, that sit before thee;

For men of sign are they;

For behold I am about to introduce my
servant, the BRANCH.

9. For behold the Stone,

Which I have set before Joshua;

Upon one stone seven eyes.

Behold I am the engraver of the engraving
thereof,

Saith Jehovah of hosts;

And I have removed the iniquity of that
land in one day.

10. In that day, saith Jehovah of hosts,

Ye shall invite every man his neighbour,
Under the vine and under the fig-tree."

PART V.

CHAP. IV.

1. And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is waked
2. out of his sleep; and said unto me, "What seest thou?" And I said, "I have looked, and behold a candlestick, all of gold, and a bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps upon it; seven and seven! Pipes are there to the seven lamps, which are upon the
3. top of it; and two olive-trees beside it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the
4. other upon the left side thereof." So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, "What are these my
5. Lord?" Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, "Knowest thou not, what these be?" And I said, "No
6. my Lord." Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, "This is the word of Jehovah unto Zerubbabel, saying,

Not by might, nor by power,

But by my spirit," saith Jehovah of hosts.

7. "What art thou, O great mountain?

Before Zerubbabel a plain.

Yet will he bring forth that head stone.

Be there exclamations, grace, grace, unto it."

8. Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying,

9. "The hands of Zerubbabel have founded this house:

His hands shall also finish it:

And thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts

Hath sent me unto you.

10. For who hath despised the day of small things?

But rejoice ye, and consider that stone.

He hath divided into the hand of Zerubbabel those seven:

The eyes of Jehovah are they,

Running to and fro through all the earth."

11. Then answered I, and said unto him, "What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick, and upon the left side thereof?"

12. And I answered a second time, and said un-

to him, "What are the two branches of the olive-trees, which through two oil gutters
13. drain off the oil from them?" And he spake unto me, saying, "Knowest thou not, what these be?" And I said, "No my
14. Lord." Then said he, "These are the two sons of oil, which stand before the Lord of all the earth."

PART VI.

CHAP. V.

1. And I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked,
2. and behold a flying roll. And he said unto me, "What seest thou?" And I said, "I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits and the breadth thereof ten cubits."
3. Then said he unto me, "This is the curse, which is going forth over the face of the whole land. Because every one that stealeth, pleadeth not guilty, in this respect, according to it; and every one that sweareth, pleadeth not guilty, in that respect, according to it."
4. "I have brought it forth, saith Jehovah of hosts,

That it may enter into the house of the thief,
And into the house of him that sweareth
falsely by my name,
And abide in the midst of his house,
And consume it, both the timber thereof,
and the stones thereof."

PART VII.

CHAP. V.

5. Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, "Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this, which is
6. going forth." And I said, "What is it?" And he said, "This is the ephah, which is going forth." He said moreover, "This is
7. their eye in all the land; and behold the cake of lead lifted up, and this, one woman
8. sitting in the midst of the ephah." Moreover he said, "THIS IS WICKEDNESS." And he threw her down in the midst of the ephah.
And he cast the mass of lead upon the mouth
9. thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and behold, two women came forth; and a wind was in their wings; for these had wings,

like the wings of a stork ; and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens. 10. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, "Whither are these women carrying the ephah?" And he said unto me, "To build her an house in the land of Shinar ; and when it is prepared, then shall she be made to rest there, according to that which is prepared for her."

PART VIII.

CHAP. VI.

1. And again I lifted up mine eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots going forth from between two mountains ; and the mountains 2. were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses, and in the second chariot 3. black horses, and in the third chariot white horses, and in the fourth chariot grised 4. horses, dark brown ones. Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, 5. "What are these, my Lord?" And the angel answered and said unto me, "These are the four winds of the heavens going forth

from standing before the Lord of the whole
6. earth. As to that, in which are the black
horses, they are going forth to the land of
the north." And the white went forth after
them. And the grised ones went forth to the
7. land of the south. And the dark brown ones
went forth and sought to go, to go to and fro
through the earth. And he said, "Go, go
to and fro through the earth." So they
8. went to and fro through the earth. Then he
summoned me and spake unto me, saying, "See
those, that go to the north country, have
caused my spirit to rest in the north country."

PART IX.

CHAP. VI.

9. And the word of Jehovah came unto me say-
10. ing, "Take *some* of the captivity, *one* of the
family of Heldai, *one* of Tobijah, and *one* of
Jedaiah, and go thou this day, and enter in-
to the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah,
11. who are come from Babylon. And take sil-
ver and gold and make crowns; and set them
upon the head of Joshua, the son of Josedech,

12. the high-priest : And speak unto him, saying,
 Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, saying,
 " Behold the man, whose name is the
 BRANCH,

For out of his place shall he BRANCH forth ;
 And shall build the temple of Jehovah :

13. Even HE shall build the temple of Jehovah ;
 Even HE shall bear up the majesty ;
 And shall sit and rule upon his throne ;
 And shall be priest upon his throne ;
 And the counsel of peace shall be between
 them two.

14. And as to the crowns, *one* shall be for Helem,
 and *one* for Tobijah, and *one* for Jedaiah, and
one for Hen, the son of Zephaniah, for a me-
 morial in the temple of Jehovah.

15. So they that are afar off shall come and build
 Into the temple of Jehovah ; and ye shall know
 That Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you.
 Yea, it shall come to pass, when ye shall
 attentively hearken
 Unto the voice of Jehovah your God."

A
COMMENTARY
ON THE
VISION OF THE PROPHET
ZECHARIAH.

PART I.

BEFORE entering on the subject, which I have undertaken to illustrate, it is necessary to remark, that the first six verses of the first chapter contain a sort of inauguratory revelation, by which Zechariah appears to be invested with the prophetic office, and which serves as a general exordium to the whole book.

The Jews are there reminded of the sore displeasure of God declared by former prophets against their fathers, of the impenitency of those persons, and of the severe execution of the divine denunciations upon them, until they confessed, that the threatened judgements had actually taken full effect and had punished them according to their deserts. Zechariah exhorts his brethren not

B

to follow so pernicious an example, but to repent of their faults and to turn unto God, in the full assurance, that he would turn unto them. It is highly probable, that Zechariah here alludes to their short-sighted selfishness, which is so warmly reproofed at the same period by the prophet Haggai, in attending to their own personal concerns, while they suffered the temple to lie in its ruins without making any strong effort to rebuild it. But, in truth, the Jews at that time needed encouragement and consolation, as much as reproof and exhortation. They were, to the last degree, dejected and dispirited at the disappointment of their high hopes, and at the successful opposition hitherto made to their pious views and endeavours; so that they were void of the necessary resolution and vigour of mind to commence an arduous work of a public nature. For this reason, both Haggai and Zechariah were commissioned to reanimate and embolden their drooping faint-hearted countrymen, by the strongest assurances of God's returning kindness, of his gracious acknowledgment and acceptance of them as his own people, and of his steadfast purpose, not only to restore Jerusalem and its temple, but to pour out his blessings on the whole country, to introduce the long-expected Messiah, and to realize the promised happiness and glory of his reign.

Such is the main end of the Vision, on which I presume to offer the following Commentary.

CAP. i. 7. Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Sebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of Jehovah unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, the prophet, saying,

Before he begins to relate his vision, the prophet gives us the date of it, which he fixes in the month Sebat, answering to the latter part of our January and the beginning of February, in the second year of Darius the son of Hystaspes, in the year B. C. 520, sixteen years after the edict of Cyrus, permitting the Jews to return to their native country. Zechariah also describes himself, as the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, whence we recognize him, as the person in whose righteous blood was closed the long line of persecutions*, which the Jews inflicted on the prophets of God, and which were to be finally filled up by the murder of his only begotten son.

The word "saying" at the end of the verse, may be properly englished, "to this purpose, in this wise, or in the following manner."

* Matthew, xxiii. 35. The arguments of Lardner, Credibility, p. 1. bk. 2. c. 6. have failed of convincing me that Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, 2 Chron. xxiv, is here meant.

8. I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse; and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were horses, red, pale*, and white.

The vision was seen in the night, whence it is certain, that it was wholly of a mental nature, not only the objects presented to view in the vision, but the light, by which they were rendered visible, being produced by the operation of the divine spirit on the prophet's mind. The scene is laid in a "bottom" or deep valley, environed by lofty mountains, and shaded by a grove of myrtles. A vast deal of ingenuity has been expended in investigating the import of this myrtle grove. I shall only observe, that since the vision

* Considerable doubt and difficulty attend the signification of the word in the original, ספסל, which our translators have rendered "speckled" in the text, and "bay" in the margin, and Dr. Blaney, "brown." The LXX, in their doubt, have given it a double rendering. That, which I have given, is founded on the following reasons. Sorek is the name of a small river in Judea, watering a valley remarkable for producing excellent grapes; and one branch of it runs through the vale of Eschol, where Joshua and his companions plucked the famous bunch of grapes, which afterwards gave name to that valley. Hence the best sorts of vines and grapes in general were denominated vines and grapes of Sorek, as we find in Genesis, xlix. 11, and Isaiah, v. 2. The colour of the grapes of Sorek when ripe, being similar to that of flax in a raw state, the word passed into an epithet for that substance likewise. It is here applied also to horses, and beyond all question as a name of colour; consequently such a colour, as may be common to grapes, flax, and horses. Bochart's Hierozoicon, vol. 1, p. 108;

is generally intended to convey comfort and confidence to the afflicted Jews, it is very agreeable to its character to believe, that as the myrtle is an evergreen plant of peculiarly pungent and delightful fragrance, so it is intended to represent to that people the state of the divine counsels toward them, undiverted from their original purpose of blessing mankind in the posterity of the patriarchs, and yet abounding in goodness and mercy undecayed to their children, thus exhaling, like a myrtle grove, a sweet "savour of life." The mention of the bottom, or deep valley, as it proves, that the scene lay between mountains, so is probably intended to have reference to the two mountains which form a conspicuous feature in the last part of the vision: whence it is farther to be collected that the same scene, in regard to locality, remains unchanged throughout the whole of it*. Among the trees of the

also, Parkhurst in v. and Gussetii, Comment. in Ling. Heb. p. 1698. This common colour can be none but a yellowish, ashy, or pale one. So Bochart renders the word "gilvi." In Shakspeare, we find "ashy pale," Venus and Adonis. Vitranga concurs in rendering the word "gilvi." Comment. p. 102.

* The LXX were, I doubt not, of this opinion. Under the influence of it, they have so paraphrased, rather than rendered, the original text, that they have been supposed to have read in their copy חוריר instead of חוריר. But since that reading is not supported by any manuscript, or

grove the prophet discerned a man riding, or rather mounted, on a red horse, for he was stationary, as if on guard; and upon looking a little more narrowly he perceived, that this rider was not alone, but advanced a little in front, as leader or chief of a troop of horsemen*, which was drawn up behind him† in three several companies distinguished by the colour of their horses. This conspicuous person was a man in external appearance only; for in the 11th verse he is expressly styled the angel of Jehovah; and from the office ascribed to the other horsemen, in the 10th verse, it is certain, that they also represented angels, part of the Lord's host.

9. Then said I, "O my Lord, what are these?"

And the angel that talked with me said unto

other authority of any weight, to suppose that they have rendered the words by a paraphrase, intended to mark more strongly their sense of the correspondence between this passage and the description of the scenery in the sixth chapter, is the more satisfactory way of accounting for their departure from the original text.

* The word *pc* is used in the old testament as well in the singular as in the plural number for cavalry or horsemen, as the word horse often is in english. See Exodus, xiv. 9, 23. 2 Kings, vi. 14, 17. vii. 6. x. 2. That the mention of horses must here include the riders is certain from the answer they make in verse 11.

† Ut ministri honorarii pone suum dominum eorum opera in legationibus utentem. Vitringa, Comment. p. 113.

10. me, "I will shew thee what these be." And the map that stood among the myrtle-trees answered and said, "These are they, whom Jehovah hath sent to go* to and fro through
11. the earth." And they answered the angel of Jehovah, that stood among the myrtle-trees, and said, "We have gone to and fro through the earth, and behold all the earth sitteth still and is at rest."

The prophet rightly conceiving, that these horsemen were emblematical representations, under which some secret meaning was couched, applied for information to an angel, who is here abruptly introduced under the title of the "angel who talked with me," and who seems to have stood beside the prophet to be the interpreter of the vision. Upon this application he promised Zechariah, that he would "shew him," that is, let him see or understand, the meaning of the mystic imagery; for the explanation is not given by the interpreting angel, but is put into the mouth of the horsemen themselves. But the question of Zechariah required two answers, which are given in order, first as to the band of horsemen generally, and next as to their leader. Accordingly

*The English version has "walk," and in verse 11 "walked." I have preferred to follow Archbishop Newcome and Dr. Blaney, in rendering *החליק* by the more general words "go, and gone."

I. The angelic captain, answering to the thoughts of the prophet, pointed, as we may justly suppose, to the company behind him, and said, "These are they, whom Jehovah has sent to go to and fro through the earth,"—to go, not in idleness or for amusement; that would be unworthy of the Lord and of themselves;—but upon the most important errands of judgement and mercy. In short, they represent those celestial messengers, whom God sends to survey, and, in a certain degree, direct, the changes of human affairs, to see to the execution of his righteous decrees, and to report to him the state of the things committed to their charge. As horsemen guide and urge their steeds according to their pleasure, so do the heavenly host operate (though I do not mean to say with equal certainty and effect, but in a manner somewhat analogous) on the imaginations and affections of men, turning them to the purposes of God's providence. Therefore, as the horsemen represent the spirits ministrant to the execution of the divine will, so do the horses, we may suppose, represent the human agents, on whom they are commissioned or permitted to exert their influence. The end indeed which the angelic ministry is intended to effect, is not here expressly declared; but it is clearly to be inferred from the speech of the leader, to

be the care and safeguard of God's chosen people in the midst of the nations, under whose rule they may be placed for their chastisement, trial, or improvement, together with the merited punishment of their enemies, who may oppress and maltreat them. Probably the fallen angels themselves are not excluded from this ministry. In Job, i. 7, Satan appears among the angels of light; and his account of himself is too much the same with that here given of the mystic riders, for the coincidence of the expressions to have been undesigned. Doubtless those spirits subserve the purposes of God, not only by "doing his errands in the gloomy deep," but by working among the children of men those very ends, which they desire to pervert, under the influence, as well as "by the sufferance of that supernal power," which brings forth good out of their evil.

No ground is here laid for the doctrine of tutelary angels; for though it is certain from this and other passages in scripture, that angels are employed in carrying into effect the will of God upon earth, yet the information we have as to the extent of their powers and the mode in which they exert them, is too scanty and indistinct for the erection of any theory; and the ignorance, in which we are left on this interesting subject, is directly ascribable to the danger,

that would arise to the purity of religious worship, if believers were tempted to fix their imaginations and affections on any spiritual objects lower than the highest of all.

II. The first part of the information required by Zechariah's question, concerning the horsemen in general, being thus given, the second which related to their leader is delivered in a similar manner. For, on hearing themselves thus described by their office, the horsemen seem to have considered it as a notice to give in their report, which they immediately delivered to their leader, or, as he is now for the first time called, the angel of Jehovah, the only person throughout the vision who bears that title, alleging, that they had made the survey appointed to them, and had found the portion of the earth submitted to their inspection sitting still and at rest, its inhabitants reposing in the tranquillity of peace and plenty, as was the case with the Persian empire, in the second year of Darius Hystaspides *. For be it always remembered, that by the word "earth," no larger part of it is to be understood, than that with which the prophecy is immediately concerned, that, in short, which contained the church or chosen people of God, which in the time of Zechariah was comprehended within the

* See Vitringa's Comment. p. 138.

limits of the Persian empire. So Dr. Blaney observes that the terms "all the earth," must be understood here and in many other places in a restricted sense for all the nations with whom Judah had a connection.

By the report, which the horsemen made to the angel of Jehovah, they clearly acknowledged in him the exalted character of their own captain or chief; and so far they answered the second part of Zechariah's question. But the prophet was to be favoured with yet fuller satisfaction on that point. For, upon receiving this report of the state of worldly affairs, the leader of the angelic horsemen immediately poured forth a powerful intercession in behalf of Jerusalem and Judea.

12. Then the angel of Jehovah answered and said, "O Jehovah of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these seventy years?"

The warmth and vehemence of this address, delivered almost with the freedom of an indignant expostulation, as it takes its rise from the state of tranquillity, in which the nations, the oppressors of Jerusalem, are reported to be reposing, so it plainly intimates both a readiness on the part of the speaker and his angelic troop to disturb

the ease and security of the heathen, and an expectation that they would soon be employed to that effect. It is as much as to say, "How long shall the heathen oppress thy people, and keep thy cities, and especially thy metropolis Jerusalem and its temple, in disgraceful ruins? The term of seventy years assigned to the desolation of the sanctuary is expired, and the time of its renewal and restoration is arrived. Wilt thou retain thine anger beyond the appointed period?"

The term of seventy years here alluded to, is not that foretold in Jeremiah xxv. 11 and xxix. 10, which began with the first captivity of the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar, and ended on their return by the decree of Cyrus; but another, which is not the subject of any prediction, yet determined, as hence appears, in the councils of God. For the equality of the two terms invites, and doubtless was intended to invite comparison;—seventy years of captivity to the people;—seventy years of indignation upon the cities of Judah. As the former was the subject of a divine decree, so, too, was the latter, though it be enunciated in a different manner; the former having been predicted before its commencement, the latter now first declared upon its termination*.

* Vitringa in the main agrees with me; but he considers the prophecy of Jeremiah, as comprehending in one predicted term, a twofold completion in the seventy years captivity and the seventy years indignation.

The latter term began with the invasion of Judea, in the year B. C. 590, when Nebuchadnezzar poured out the divine judgements upon it, by the capture of its towns and cities, and by forming the siege of Jerusalem, which was taken in less than two years after and was destroyed together with the temple. Now in the second year of Darius Hystaspides, answering to the year B. C. 520, those seventy years were just expired, or on the point of expiring, and therefore we conclude that of them the angel here speaks*. But since this second term of seventy years, extending, as it did, sixteen years beyond the term of the captivity, was not specifically predicted among the woes denounced by the prophet upon the Jews; it is therefore animadverted upon with

* Bishop Newton in his eighth Dissertation, following Dean Prideaux, Connection, Book 3, part 1, reckons the seventy years from the actual destruction of Jerusalem to the decree of Darius Hystaspides for the restoration of the temple, in the fourth year of his reign: but since the angel does not fix prophetically a period, from which we are to reckon forward, but historically, a period, from which we are to count backward the seventy years, and since that period falls in the second year of Darius, the former mode of computing the term appears to be the correct one. See Dr. Blaney's note on the passage, and Vitringa's Prolegomena p. 17, and his Comment. on the text. I do not find, that Dr. Hales, in his analysis, has given a computation of these seventy years, or referred to this part of Zechariah's vision. Some disagreement will be found, and must be expected, in the arrangement of this intricate and perplexed portion of chronology.

considerable freedom by the angel, as an instance of great hardship upon that people, who were not prepared for an indignation, which must seem to them to exceed the appointed period.

The intercession is addressed with emphasis to the Lord of hosts, the God "to whom all things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth do bow and obey," but with a particular respect to his providential administration of human affairs, for the accomplishment of his purposes in favour of his peculiar people, by the agency of his angels. By thus coupling the mention of the divine government with an allusion to the divine purpose, the interceding angel evidently intends to arouse, if I may so speak, the jealousy of the Almighty to a vindication of his majesty in the eyes of men, by the chastisement of the haughty, domineering nations of the earth, and by the restoration of the people and land of Judah to a state of security and prosperity.

Upon this intercessory address, we are informed that

13. Then Jehovah answered the angel that talked with me, good words, comfortable words.

Since the answer proceeded from Jehovah himself, in words heard by the prophet, is it allowable to add a supplement to the scene and to suppose the presence of Jehovah in glory?

In favour of this, it may be urged, that several personages are in the course of the vision brought upon the scene with great abruptness. But then, we are not left in doubt as to their being really introduced; and, therefore, those instances cannot be considered as cases in point for the supposition just mentioned; nor do I think, that we can allow ourselves, in the absence of all authority, to hazard such a supplement to the word of God. It is however certain, that a divine being in some manner was present in the vision, a person in the Godhead, to whom the incommunicable name of right belonged, and whose kind consolatory words, Zechariah heard addressed to the angel interpreter, from whose mouth he again received them. But those comfortable words certainly did not proceed from the interpreting angel, for to him they were addressed; nor from any of the company of horsemen, for they were only the messengers sent by Jehovah; still less can they be imagined to have come from Zechariah himself; and since no other person but the angel intercessor is described to be present, they must have proceeded from him.

Besides, it is observable, that the words are addressed, not to the angel of Jehovah, who made the intercession in behalf of Judah and Jerusalem, to which they are in point of fact the

reply, but to the interpreting angel. Now, this circumstance is utterly unaccountable, if we suppose the presence of some other person, to whom the sacred name is applied; and the same difficulty stands in the way, if we suppose the words to have been pronounced by an unseen speaker in a voice from heaven. In short, there cannot be any reason assigned, why the answer should be directed to the angel interpreter, rather than to the intercessor, whose warm and vehement address had called for it, except this, that not only the intercession, but the reply proceeded from him, and therefore the latter could not be directed to him.

Hence it follows by immediate consequence, that the angel of Jehovah is no other than Jehovah himself. Nor ought we to be surprised at this, for the characters which he sustains are such, as to warrant his assumption of the holiest name of deity.

For I. He appears as leader and captain of the angelic band, to whom it is given in charge to survey the condition of God's people in the world, and make report concerning it to their almighty sovereign. From such an exalted office the mind can hardly separate the idea of divinity; and that first impression is confirmed and settled by the authority of scripture. The

captain of the Lord's host is related to have appeared to Joshua the son of Nun, and is, by the sacred historian, expressly called Jehovah*. II. He is styled, by way of excellence, "the angel of Jehovah." That title is given to one person only in the course of the vision; and he who bears it is thereby distinguished, as from the interpreting angel, so from the other angels, who are introduced in the following scenes. Now, it appears from many passages of the old testament that a person, styled the angel of Jehovah, does also bear the very name and speak in the person of Jehovah himself†. Hence we have good reason to believe, that in the passage before us, the angel of Jehovah and Jehovah himself

* See Joshua v. 14. vi. 2. and Shuckford's Connection bk. 12. vol. 3. p. 368.

† Genesis xxii. 11, 12. Exodus iii. 2, 4, 6. Judges xiii. 15,—23. In the last passage the angel of Jehovah declares his name to be Wonderful, (our english version renders it Secret,) the same name as is ascribed to the Messiah in Isaiah ix, 6. But the most remarkable part of the occurrences is, that when Manoah and his wife have at the angel's express command offered a burnt offering to Jehovah, the angel himself signifies his favourable acceptance of it by ascending in the flame of the altar. And afterwards when Manoah expresses his terror at having seen God, his wife, justly argues, that "if Jehovah were pleased to kill them, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at their hands:" thus doubly proving that they considered the angel of Jehovah to be Jehovah himself. See also Vitringa's Comment. p. 132, and the collection of passages in Dr. Pye Smith's Testimony to the Messiah, vol. 1, p. 333.

are one and the same person. In other passages of the prophetic writings, he is disclosed to us as Michael the archangel, the prince of God's people, and the leader of his armies*. III. The angelic horsemen, the messengers of Jehovah, sent on his errands through the countries inhabited by his people, by actually making their report to the person who is called the angel of Jehovah, shew thereby, that they consider him to be the person, by whose authority they are sent†. IV. This exalted being takes to himself the office of mediator; he intercedes for the people, the city, and therein for the temple of God. But to make intercession on their behalf, is the proper office of the Messiah, of him, who in the revelation of St. John, i. 8, takes to himself the full sense and meaning of the title *Jehovah Sabaoth*. V. The intercessor, by appealing to a divine decree, as known to himself, though it be not recorded in holy writ, does thereby represent himself to be *particeps divini concilii*, one of the privy council of the most high. As such the Messiah is foretold by Isaiah, ix. 6, under the title of the Counsellor, one who

* Compare Daniel x. 21. xii. 1, with Rev. xii. 9. xix. 11—16: and see Bishop Horsley's sermon on Daniel iv, 17.

† *Angelus Jehovæ qui stabat inter myrtos est ipse angelus increatus, cui ceteri honorem hunc deferunt, ut rationem eidem reddant de suo itinere.* Burkii Gnomon, p. 476.

is present at the formation of the divine purpose, the performance of which he also superintends.

And now, the consideration that the intercessor, the angel of Jehovah, is no other than Jehovah himself, enables us to see the reason, why the answer to his intercession is addressed to the interpreting angel, who was the established medium of communication with the prophet; because, otherwise, he would have appeared to utter a soliloquy, quite inconsistently with the circumstances and with the lively spirit of the scene. Nor does it appear, in any degree, strange or improbable, that the great mediator between God and man should first, as intercessor for his people, address himself to the Father in their behalf, and then, in the assurance that he had made successful intercession, communicate to them an answer of peace by the prophet, through the angel interpreter*.

* See Vitringa's Comment, p. 149.

Dr. Blaney contends that the doctrine of our Lord's divinity "draws its decisive proofs from the new testament only." Note on Jeremiah xxiii. 6. Nor would I contend that the above passage is to be numbered among the decisive proofs of the doctrine. Still that and other like passages supply us with arguments strongly corroborative of it; and at the same time the clear revelation of the doctrine in the new testament not only throws light upon many texts of the Hebrew scriptures, but such sort of light, as to vindicate them from the charge, to which they would otherwise be liable, of extreme darkness and confusion and of conferring titles of divinity on a creature.

Thus, at length, the second part of the answer to Zechariah's question, as to the person who appeared foremost of the equestrian company, is given under five heads:—first, that he is the captain of the Lord's host; secondly, that he is the angel of Jehovah; thirdly, that he receives the report of the angels; fourthly, that he is the intercessor for the people of God; and fifthly, that he is very Jehovah.

Dr. Blaney himself admits, in his appendix to Zechariah p. 83, that "intimations of the doctrine of the trinity are to be met with in the old testament;" but then he maintains, p. 81, "that no part of the revelation of the old testament was delivered through the immediate ministry of the Son of God, since that is cited as the distinguished characteristic of the Gospel dispensation. Heb. i. 1, 2."

Here the learned professor has brought forward the reason, which has induced him, as it seems to me, to give such a turn to his translation of several passages in the prophets Jeremiah and Zechariah, as to exclude our Lord Jesus Christ from the appellation of Jehovah. That Dr. Blaney, acted honestly herein, not swayed by any indirect motive or heterodox opinion, I am sure; but that he wrote under the influence of the argument drawn from Heb. i. 1, 2, in giving the renderings just alluded to, I do not doubt.

It is certain, that the Gospel dispensation was delivered to men by the immediate ministry of the Son of God, and that this is one of its distinguishing characteristics, and is stated as such by the apostle in Heb. i. 1, 2. But it does not by any means infringe thereupon, to believe, that the Son of God appeared personally to the prophets of old. For by "the fathers" we are to understand the body of the Israelitish people of ancient times, not the prophets or patriarchs; for to them God did shew himself immediately and personally; as he did to Moses, face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend; and so to Abraham, Isaiah, and others. By them God spake to the fathers; and the immediate ministry which he used therein, was the ministry of those

Having now ascertained in general the nature and office of the persons represented by the horsemen and their leader, we are prepared to inquire into the particular subjects, upon which they were commissioned to act. These will be determined by considering, I. The view afforded us by the prophet Daniel of the future state of human affairs; II. The number of troops into which the angelic horsemen are divided; and III. The colours of their horses.

I. In the book of Daniel we find two leading prophecies, predicting under different images the general state of human affairs, until the final close of this earthly scene. Thence we learn, that four great kingdoms, so far universal, as to comprehend within their limits the chosen people of God, were destined, or would be permitted, to bear rule over them on earth. The predictions are so clear and have been so ably illustrated, that it is hardly necessary to name

persons. Accordingly the Son of God here speaks to the fathers; yet not by his own immediate ministry, as he did when he came in the flesh, but by that of the prophet Zechariah. To maintain otherwise would be to confound the author of the prophetic word with the ministers thereof. Therefore the distinction drawn by the apostle will not be effaced, nor will any occasion be afforded for alleging, that any part of the old testament was communicated to the fathers by the immediate ministry of the Son of God, because he appeared in vision to the prophet Zechariah or any other prophet,

the four kingdoms, as being the Babylonian, the Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman empires. These having subsisted in succession for the several terms allotted to them respectively, are to be succeeded and finally absorbed by the universal and everlasting dominion of Christ, first planted in grace, and by degrees growing up, expanding, and at last ripening into glory.

Now since Zechariah's vision takes its rise from the state of God's chosen people in the world, and since the horsemen represent angelic beings inspecting human affairs, delivering reports upon them to the supreme disposer, and both authorized and enabled to interfere in them and regulate them according to the divine direction, it is certain, that their commission, if not limited to the concerns of the five monarchies, must at least extend to them and embrace them, as principle subjects of their agency.

II. If a vision of the same kind had been presented to the prophet Isaiah, he would probably have seen the horsemen divided into five companies, the first of which would represent the ministers of God's providence directing and impelling the powers of the Babylonian empire to execute the divine wrath upon his rebellious people. In a similar vision presented to a prophet toward the close of the Babylonian dominion, it

is probable, that four such companies would have appeared, the first of which would represent the angelic host superintending the affairs of the Jews during their captivity, animating the Medes and Persians to undertake the conquest of Babylon, and influencing their government to restore the Jews. But at the time of Zechariah's vision these events had taken place; those two companies had fulfilled their ministry; and consequently they could not be properly introduced upon the scene. The number of companies would then be reduced to three, the very number seen by Zechariah. Following the order and succession of the empires, the first troop is intended to represent the ministering spirits surveying and directing the affairs of the Jews during their subjection to the Persian empire, removing the obstructions which that government offered to the rebuilding of the temple of God and the complete restoration of the people, and finally preparing the way for the Macedonian conqueror and the establishment of his kingdom in all its wide extent. By parity of reasoning, the second company seen by Zechariah, denotes the angelic messengers appointed to superintend the concerns of God's people while the third earthly monarchy should bear rule, and to array the forces destined to reduce its strength and finally to over-

throw it. The third and last of the mystic cohorts represents the celestial ministers preparing the way for the immediate arrival of the prince of peace, waiting on him, and communicating with him during his earthly course; then ministering to the heirs of his salvation, supporting and strengthening his church, confounding the designs of its enemies, marshalling the host to the battle against his apostate subjects, gradually exhausting the resources of the heathen empire, and at length subduing it to his victorious kingdom.

III. Archbishop Newcome, following Capellus, and quoted with approbation by Dr. Blaney, supposes the various colours of the horses bestrode by the angelic bands to denote only in general, that there were differences in their several ministries, without any distinct and proper application to the nature and effect of them. But Vitringa*, a name second to none on these subjects, is of another opinion, and speaks of such "vague me-

* Vitringa considers the colours of the horses to denote the external state of the church; and referring red to bloodshed and war, he interprets it of the condition of Judea all the time from the Babylonian captivity to the second year of Darius Hystaspides. But this interpretation is plainly inconsistent with the words of the angelic captain on the red horse, who so far from appearing as a minister of calamity to the Jews delivers a powerful intercession in their favour. Moreover the divine anger is strongly declared in the pro-

ditions" in terms which I will not repeat. For the mere general purpose of shewing that the horsemen were employed on different ministries, it would have been sufficient to state, that their horses were of various colours, without any particular mention of them; but the care taken to specify those colours shews, that they are intended to point to the specific nature of the different ministries. I therefore concur with the profoundly studious and extensively learned commentator cited above, that the colours of the horses have an appropriate signification relative to the ministry of the riders, although I do not agree with him, as to the especial interpretation of any one. At the same time it must be remarked as an evident truth, that any one particular colour cannot extend, or be interpreted to extend, to every part of a manifold ministry, but only so far as to characterize one or two of its most obvious features.

clamation put into the mouth of the prophet against the nations that are at ease; i. e. according to Vitringa himself, the Persian empire. Now is it reasonable to believe, that the red colour of the horses, denoting according to Vitringa himself vengeance and war (*equo rubro, quem insederat per omne hoc tempus ultionis—respectum habet ad sanguinem bello effundendum*) has no relation whatever to that declaration, but to an anger which is solemnly declared to be now overpast? Vitringa, p. 133—135.

Red is the colour of fire, the image of wrath, and therefore when applied to the ministers of divine wrath against the Persian empire, it strictly corresponds to the divine declaration, "With great anger am I angry against the nations that are at ease." It is also the image of war, quick in its operation, consuming in its effects. Such above most others was the character of the war, which ended in the destruction of the Persian monarchy and in the death of one of the most virtuous and amiable of its monarchs. So impartial is the divine anger against an oppressive people and government, and so regardless of the personal character of the governor; an impartiality and disregard, which may be traced in other instances. The captain of the host is seen on a red horse, as if particularly commanding this band, because this was the first to be called into action.

The colour of the horses in the second troop is pale; the complexion of disease, of languishing sickness, of death. It is the colour of the horse in the fourth seal of St. John's Revelation, whose rider's name is death, and is given to the horses of this troop, because the human agents represented thereby and directed or impelled by the ministering spirits to act against the Macedonian empire, did not proceed to cut it off suddenly and by rapid conquest, as the Persian

monarchy had fallen, but by the slower progress of rivalries between its component parts, of misgovernment, of insurrections and civil wars, and all the weakness of internal disorders, analogous to a long course of sickness; so that the sword of an enemy was hardly wanted to slay the victim, which already lay expiring in his presence. Antiochus Asiaticus, the last heir of the Seleucidæ, was deprived of his dominions by Pompey, and reduced to a private station without a struggle; and about forty four years after, the last remnant of the Egyptian kingdom expired with the breath of Cleopatra.

White is the colour that marks the horses of the third and last company. It is the emblem of religious, moral, and judicial purity; also, of rejoicing, of victory, and of celestial royalty. The saints and angels above are represented as clad in white raiment; our Saviour's garment at the time of his transfiguration is described to be white as well as radiant; and in Daniel vii. 9, the ancient of days sitting on his throne has his garment white as the snow. In Revelation xix, Christ appears riding on a white horse as captain of the heavenly armies, who "followed him upon white horses clothed in fine linen white and clean;" nor is the royal victor, whom the beloved apostle saw on a horse of the same colour, at the

opening of the first seal, any other than the Lord himself going forth to win his empire. In this point the coincidence of the prophet with the apostle is very remarkable. In Zechariah, the first scene of his vision concludes, and in St. John, the first seal of the book of destiny opens, with an emblem strikingly similar and denoting subjects, which, though not quite the same, are altogether analogous and strictly correspondent. The former presents us with the host of angelic ministers to be sent forth in due time under their divine commander, to minister to the heirs of salvation, directing and seconding their efforts, enabling them to fight the good fight, to overcome the heathen enemy, and to make a conquest of the Roman empire: the latter discloses to view the almighty captain of that heavenly host, the head of the church going forth on his career, conquering and to conquer.

We now come to those good and comfortable words, which are addressed to the interpreting angel by the divine captain of the Lord's host, and are then repeated by him to Zechariah in the form of a message or proclamation; which he charges the prophet to deliver to his countrymen.

14. So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, I have been jealous with great

15. jealousy for Jerusalem and for Zion; and with great anger am I angry with the heathen that are at ease; because I was but a little while* angry, and they helped forward the
16. affliction†. Therefore thus saith Jehovah, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith Jehovah of hosts, and the line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.
17. Cry yet again, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Yet again shall my cities be dispersed abroad‡ through prosperity; and Jehovah will yet again comfort Zion and will yet again choose Jerusalem.

* I prefer rendering *עַד* as an adverb of time, in which sense it is sometimes used. The anger of God was certainly severe and is often declared in terms expressive of the greatest severity. Yet the seventy years was but a short time in his sight.

† Dr. Blaney reads "her affliction," taking the *ן* for the feminine affix instead of the feminine termination. The singular affix is admissible notwithstanding the two antecedents. But I cannot agree with him to render *עֲרִיצָתָהּ* "they combined." The verb signifies to help, and is commonly followed by lamed; when otherwise it is for the most part connected with pronominal affixes, in which lamed is understood.

‡ Dr. Blaney follows Schultens and Michaelis in borrowing from the Arabic the signification of overflowing or overspreading. Such however cannot be proved to be the meaning of the word *פָּרַס* in the old testament; where it is always used in that of dispersing or scattering; generally in a bad sense, though now and then in a good one. Thus in 2 Sam. xx. 22, our translators have rendered it, "retired," but in the margin more literally, "were scattered." To justify the sense

The angel here commands Zechariah to deliver two proclamations, the former of a more special, the latter of a more general kind. The former is divided into three parts.

I. In the first the Lord notices his favour to Jerusalem in the times of old: "I have been jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy." In rendering the verb in the past tense, I have followed Dr. Blaney; but I cannot agree with him in thinking it intended to express the divine jealousy directed against Jerusalem; a sense which would require a different form of

of overflowing or overspreading Gen. ix. 19, is cited; where our english version renders overspread. But it was not the intention of its learned authors to give a literal rendering of the word *ממנו*. In performing the duty of faithful translators they considered the english idiom as well as the literal meaning of hebrew words, and where our language would not bear a literal rendering, they contented themselves with expressing in the best manner possible the meaning of the passage. Accordingly in the text just cited they have rendered, "Of them was the whole earth overspread;" meaning that it was overspread by the dispersion of Noah's posterity. Parkhurst, in v. adhering closely to the letter of the hebrew, renders, "was dispersed or disseminated." The intention of the sacred writer is to say, that the earth in general was peopled by Noah's descendants, who being scattered abroad in many divisions over its surface founded towns, cities, and kingdoms. So the Chaldee paraphrase has *ארבעי*, dispersi sunt; and the ancient versions shew, that the idea in the minds of their authors was that of a dispersion into separate communities, not that of a continuous overspreading, which was prevented by the miracle at Babel. I have therefore preferred to render the word dispersed, rather than "spread" in this place.

expression*. By the mention of his ancient jealousy for Jerusalem the Lord would shew, that he remembered with pleasure those days of old, when he led his people by the right hand of Moses, and afterwards reared the thrones of David and Solomon above those of other princes; and he would intimate, that he was about to do the same in time to come.

II. Next the anger of God is declared against the rulers and oppressors of his people at the present time: "I am angry with great anger against the heathen that are at ease;" that are reposing in haughty and insolent confidence, regardless of justice, consulting their own pleasure only, fearless of God and of his judgements. The use of the present tense plainly points to the Persians, under whose rule the Jews were then living, as the people meant by the heathen. Besides, those Gentiles are described as sitting at ease, contemplating their own greatness in the calm security of conscious power; a description which at that time would apply to the Persians,

* Only one passage, Psalm cvi. 16, can be produced to support the rendering of *אָפּ*, when followed by *י*, in a bad sense. There the meaning is so plainly determined by the context that no doubt can be entertained. But with this single exception the remark of Aben Ezra cited by Buxtorf holds good, that when the word is construed with lamed it is always used in a good sense. See the Roman edition of Buxtorf's Lexicon by Montaldi, and Parkhurst, in v.

but to no other people; certainly not to the people of Babylon, under their great reverse of fortune, the sense of which, still recent and sore, was just on the point of exciting them to an ill-advised and destructive insurrection. The reason of the divine displeasure against the Persians is added: "Because I was angry but a little while, and they helped forward the affliction." The seventy years captivity in Babylon, the season of the divine wrath denounced by Jeremiah, is in the sight of God but a little while. The anger ceased at the expiration of that term, and the affliction ought then to have ceased also. But this unhappily was not the case. The Persians helped forward the affliction. For although Cyrus sent home the Jews with their sacred vessels, with strong words of exhortation, and with many kind acts of encouragement to rebuild their city and temple, yet the execution of his favourable decree was afterwards, by the malicious and artful misrepresentations of the Samaritans and by their intrigues and briberies with the Persian governors and at the Persian court, retarded and even brought to a stand*. Hence,

* It is well known, that the decrees of the Persian king were irrevocable, Dan. vi. 15. But opportunities would often occur of evading the force and suspending the execution of those decrees without repealing them. Besides, it seems that when the monarch was hard pressed by this fundamen-

beside the seventy years captivity of the Jews predicted by the prophet Jeremiah, another term of seventy years partly contemporary with the former, but surpassing it by sixteen years, was extended over the desolations of Judea*. This heavy calamity, as to its immediate cause, was chargeable on the injustice of the Persian government; and therefore the Persians are said to have "helped forward the affliction." Besides, although they cannot be accused, except in the instance of Haman's intended massacre, of having maliciously persecuted and destroyed the Jews, yet doubtless the despotism of the great king pressed heavily upon them; and the instance above referred to affords sufficient proof, that he and his courtiers would not often have the inclination or perhaps the leisure to attend to the vexations inflicted on a distant, weak, and defenceless people†. And let it not be thought a hard thing,

tal law militating against his own will, the courtesy or the fears of the royal lawyers could discover another, which permitted the great king "to do whatever he pleased." Upon which Herodotus remarks, that "thus they neither abrogated the law through fear of the king, nor exposed their own lives to danger in defence of it." Thalia. c. 31, p. 210. Wesseling.

* See p. 12 of this Commentary.

† Vitringa thus gives the general character of the Persian government. *Aspectus ejus fuit tristis, luridus, sævus, multis sævitie et immanis crudelitatis notis insignis, licet cum respectu ad populum Dei nullo modo sanguinarius; veruntamen non lætus quoque nec liberalis.* p. 134.

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that the anger of the Almighty is declared against the instruments of his own judgements; for although God condescends to use sinners as the means of executing his wrath upon the guilty, yet they are not the less answerable for the wrongs they may commit in executing it. Therefore the divine displeasure is justly, as well as strongly, declared against the Persian empire, the instrument of the seventy years indignation, as it had been denounced by former prophets against the Babylonians, the agents in the seventy years captivity. At the same time, the great anger of God is not represented as ready to fall upon it; nor are the angelic ministers commissioned to begin the work of retribution. Indeed we may rather collect, that in the merciful forbearance of God a farther space would be allowed to the Persian government, and that without overturning it at present he would cause his temple and city to be rebuilt and restored. This last resolve is announced in very absolute and emphatic terms and forms the third portion of the first proclamation comprehended in the words of comfort.

III. "I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies." The affection I formerly entertained for her, like that of a husband or of a father, is now the same as it was in the days of old, when I was jealous for my people and holy city, when I suf-

ferred none to injure them with impunity. I will again assert my power in their behalf and will manifest my presence with them and my favour towards them, by enabling them first to rebuild my holy temple and afterwards to raise Jerusalem from her ashes and to stretch forth the builders' line over the extent of her walls, "to mark well her bulwarks and set up her palaces."

The prediction was speedily fulfilled in respect to the rebuilding of the temple; for within five years it was finished and dedicated; and it continued afterwards to receive great decorations and enrichments from the pious liberality of many persons in public and private stations. If however in the rebuilding of God's house we include, as we certainly ought to do, the complete restitution of its furniture and the restoration of its service and worship, we must pass onward sixty two years farther; to the mission of Ezra, in the year before Christ 458, and in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, who under the influence probably of his Jewish queen Esther, sent that learned, pious, and patriotic priest to Jerusalem with the remaining vessels, that had belonged to Solomon's temple, with additional presents of gold and silver, and with complete authority to restore the whole law of Moses and to settle the ecclesiastical and civil polity of the people according to its rules.

Not long after the reformation of Ezra the other part of the prophecy, as to the stretching forth of the builders' line upon the city was fulfilled. In the twentieth year of the same king, Nehemiah, who held the office of cup-bearer, an office of high rank and of great influence and emolument in the Persian court, having heard from his Jewish brethren, that the holy city remained still in a ruinous state, with its walls broken down and its gates burnt, as they had been left by the Babylonians, and being deeply touched by the melancholy description, used the credit he had with the king, in which probably he was aided by the intercession of the queen, to obtain leave of absence to go to Jerusalem and reside there for a sufficient time and with full authority and ample means to rebuild the fallen walls and set up new gates. It is however not improbable, that Artaxerxes might be in some measure swayed by political motives in so readily granting Nehemiah's request; for after the victory of the Athenians under Cimon, he might fear lest that adventurous people should make a descent on the coast of Syria or Palestine, and might therefore be inclined to attach the inhabitants of a city so strongly situated, as Jerusalem, to his interest by gratitude for benefits received. Furnished with full powers Nehemiah arrived at Jerusalem, laid

his commission before the priests and rulers, and without loss of time began his great work ; which by the zeal, labour, and courage of that generous and devoted man, with his associates and under-workmen, was completed in two and fifty days, an almost incredibly short space, when not only the magnitude of the work is considered, but the difficulties thrown in the way of it by the vexations, the scoffs, the threats, and even the active opposition of the surrounding enemies of the Jews*.

The city being brought to a state of security by the restoration of its walls and gates, Nehemiah both encouraged and obliged a part of the people to build themselves houses, and settle their families in it, he himself setting the example by living there in splendid and almost royal hospitality. So successful were his efforts, that not long after Herodotus† compares the city of Cadytis, the name which he gives Jerusalem, to the great and wealthy Sardis, the metropolis of Asia Minor ; and in about one hundred years afterwards Hecataeus Abderites, an author cited by Josephus‡, speaks of Jerusalem, as a fortified

* See the highly interesting and I may say affecting account which Nehemiah has given of his severe but successful labours in the fourth chapter of his book.

† Thalia, c. 5.

‡ Contra Apionem. lib. 1. c. 22.

city of fifty stadia in compass and containing one hundred and twenty thousand men. He also briefly describes the temple, with its sanctuary and part of its furniture.

The second proclamation, "Cry yet again," announces blessings of wider extent than the former, which went no farther than the rebuilding of the temple and the restoration of the city. "Yet again shall my cities be dispersed* abroad through prosperity." Not only Jerusalem shall be rebuilt and flourish, but "cities," which God graciously acknowledges for his own, shall be dispersed abroad, shall rear their heads on every side throughout the whole country, at once the effect and the indication of prosperity, of the plenty, the superabundance, of the necessities and comforts of life. Accordingly the author before cited, Hecataeus Abderites†, describes the country of Judea as being spacious and extremely fertile, "and containing many fortresses and villages scattered throughout its extent." But these were only marks, that the prediction was advancing towards its accomplishment. Its actual completion must be referred to the times of the Asmonean princes, to the government of Simon Maccabeus, and especially of his son John Hyrcanus, who during his reign of twenty nine years

* See the note ‡, p. 29.

† Josephus as before cited.

entirely delivered his country from the slavish yoke of the Syrian kings, reduced Samaria and Idumea to subjection, and possessed his dominions in liberty, peace, and prosperity*.

This proclamation concludes with a repetition of the assurance and kind encouragements given to Jerusalem in the former, though expressed in somewhat different terms. God will treat Jerusalem with all the favour he had formerly heaped upon her; she shall be again the distinguished object of his choice; "the city of the great king, well known in her palaces as a sure refuge." The completion of the promise is justly referred by Vitringa†, Dr. Blaney, and others, to the increase and prosperity of Jerusalem under the government of the Maccabees, who enlarged, improved, and adorned it, strengthened its fortifications, removed the chief means of annoying the temple in case an enemy should get possession of the city, and built themselves a palace and castle. Emboldened by the tranquillity and prosperity of the country in general, the inhabitants ventured to extend the city beyond its ancient boundaries. Josephus‡ tells us, that "overflowing with numbers it gradually crept

* See Prideaux's connection, pt. 2, b. 5 & 6.

† Commentary, p. 176—178.

‡ De bello Judaico, lib. 5. c. 4. Hudson.

out beyond its walls; and the citizens joining the parts that lay northward of the temple to the hill, went forward to a considerable distance, till they had covered with their habitations a fourth hill, which is called Bezetha." This suburb was afterwards surrounded with a strong wall by Herod Agrippa. Thus did the Lord "comfort Zion and shew that he had again chosen Jerusalem."

PART II.

CAP. I. 18. _____ 21.

IN elucidating the predictions of the Hebrew prophets, modern expositors have the advantage of comparing them with those of the new testament, and especially of tracing the accomplishment of both in a great variety of events through a long succession of ages. The interpretation before given of the first part of Zechariah's vision has sufficiently illustrated this remark. But at the time when the prophet published the narrative of his vision, such helps were not at hand, and consequently that portion of the first scene, which relates to the horsemen, must then have been found very obscure; and especially so because the threefold division of the equestrian host could not be referred to any three subjects particularly determined to that number and represented under similar emblems in any preceding prophecy. At the same time the interest was

increased and the difficulty not abated by the certainty, that those symbols were, in some part at least, intended to apply to events, which were either in the course of taking place or might be expected shortly to occur. For this reason I presume with all humility to suppose, that it seemed good to the Spirit of prophecy to introduce in the following part or scene, such emblems, as would not only typify and shadow out the events intended to be thereby predicted, but would in some measure clear up and remove the obscurity and difficulty of the foregoing scene.

18. Then lifted I up mine eyes and saw; and

19. behold four horns. And I said unto the angel that talked with me, "What are these?"

And he said unto me, "These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

There are various opinions as to the manner in which these horns were exhibited. Vitringa* alluding to the device of Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, related 1 Kings, xxii, 11, supposes Zechariah to have seen four horns of iron impelled and thrust forward by the hands of some invisible powers. Michaelis† conceives them to have been the four horns of two oxen ruining

* Commentary, p. 183.

† Supplement ad Lex. Heb. p. 915.

busily about in the midst of grass of such rank growth, that nothing more of the beasts was to be seen. Dr. Blaney* seems to think (for he does not express his opinion at length) that they were seen firmly fixed in the ground, sharp-pointed and standing upright.

In order to form a clear and true conception of prophetic symbols, we ought to suppose them, except some particular variation be expressed, to be presented to view in conformity with their nature and their appearance in a natural state. Now the prophet does not afford the least hint, that the horns he saw were artificial ones, or that they were wielded and brandished about by unseen agents. As then there is nothing in Zechariah's narrative, so neither is there any thing in the nature of horns to warrant Vitrings's notion. For similar reasons it is not easy to imagine with Dr. Blaney that the horns appeared rising out of the ground. Horns are not so found in their natural state; and the narrative contains nothing that can induce us to suppose them to have appeared in any other than a natural form. The opinion of Michaelis then, which supposes the horns to have appeared in the usual way, growing on the heads of animals, whose natural weapon and ornament they are, seems to approach

* Note on the Text.

the nearest to a true account of the emblems exhibited to the prophet; but to meet it exactly it needs a few alterations, additions, and restrictions.

If the four powers represented by the symbols had arisen by pairs at a time, there would be no impediment to our supposing with Michaelis, that the horns were seen on the heads of a pair of oxen. But those powers, if the interpretation hereafter given of them be correct, certainly did not appear in pairs, but in solitary succession from the first to the fourth. For this reason they could not be properly represented by exactly such symbols as that very learned man has supposed.

Since then the powers were not only four in number, but arose separately and in succession, since each was represented by its own proper horn, and since all the horns appeared according to the nature of horns, growing on the heads of animals, there seems to be but one way of forming to ourselves a true conception of the appearance they made to Zechariah; and that it is to figure in our minds four several animals (whether of any known species or not, and whether alike or not, is of no consequence) bearing each a single horn high and pointed, like that of the he-goat in Daniel. Four such monoceros beasts would

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adequately represent four several and successive powers, in perfect congruity with other emblems in scripture representing similar powers; and the haughty and furious manner, in which they might carry and toss their horns, would denote corresponding qualities in those powers.

By this way of figuring to the mind the objects presented to the prophet in the vision, no violence is offered to his language. It is little else than supposing him to speak by a very common figure, Synecdoche, using the word horns for horned animals, and taking that part of the whole, which was most conspicuous, and most important, and by which his attention was chiefly arrested and intended to be arrested. Hence it is unnecessary to follow the learned professor of Gottingen into his meadow of high and thick grass; for since Zechariah's attention was directed merely to the horns, it was unnecessary to add any thing farther to the description of the symbolical unicorns.

When Zechariah put the question to the interpreting angel, "What are these?" that is, what do they signify? it cannot be supposed, that the prophet needed a general explanation of so common a scriptural figure, as horns, put for strength, dominion, royal power. Of this the angel was well aware, and therefore he instructs him only as to the immediate application of the symbols:

"These are the horns, powers, empires, which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

This answer conveyed sufficient information to the prophet for time past, present, and to come; for the verb "scattered" though put in the past tense is not intended to express past time alone, but is to be understood in an extended and indefinite sense, as the Hebrew perfect often is, to denote that which usually takes place or a course of action. Thus it comprehends not only those who have scattered, but those who are at present scattering, and also those who may afterwards scatter the Jews. The sense of scattering also is to be somewhat extended, and is to be applied not only to those who actually scatter the people of God by sending or driving them into foreign countries, but also to those who bear rule over them while in a state of dispersion. Every one knows, that the return of the Jews, for which the edict of Cyrus and the favour of some of his successors afforded them an opportunity, took effect in only a partial degree. The number of Jews, who yet remained abroad, was vastly greater than that of the people, who returned to their proper home. They had acquired possessions, they were engaged in various trades and occupations in the land of their sojourn, which they could not conveniently quit or give

up; and their children after them for similar reasons continued to reside in their adopted country, in which they built synagogues for divine worship, and whence they came up to Jerusalem only on particular and perhaps distant occasions. They were in this condition in the time of the apostles, for which reason we find St. Peter and St. James directing their epistles to the "dispersion" of Israel.

But in this passage we may venture yet farther to extend the meaning of the word "scattered" to the consequences incident to a nation on being scattered, that is to say, sore oppression, heavy exaction, political servitude. It is so explained in the twenty first verse, where the horns are said to have scattered Judah, "so that a man could not lift up his head". Now in this sense it is certain, that the Jews were scattered by all the four kingdoms typified by the horns. But if it be deemed necessary that specific instances should be produced of scattering, properly so called, by every one of those powers; emitting as unnecessary, any precise mention of the Babylonian captivity, we find a notable instance of such

* I do not contend that $\pi\pi$ signifies to oppress; and I assent to Gussetius who denies it the significations of grinding and crushing; but I apprehend, that learned author would not have refused to Zechariah the right of explaining the sense in which he used the word.

dispersion under the Persian government in the reign of Darius Ochus, when having suppressed the revolt of Phenicia, he entered into Judea and sent many thousands of the Jews into exile in Egypt and Hyrcania*. Under the Macedonian empire, the terrible persecutions carried on by Ptolemy Philopator in Egypt, and Antiochus Epiphanes in Syria, must have had the effect of scattering the Jews even from the seats of their dispersions. The last named tyrant in particular is recorded to have sold forty thousand of them for slaves to the neighbouring nations; and again two years after that, his lieutenant Apollonius by his extreme cruelty scattered abroad all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; "insomuch that the city became strange to those that were born in her, and her own children left her†."

The dispersion of the Jews by the Romans under the emperors Vespasian and Hadrian is too well known to need more than a general reference. But in regard to that empire it must be considered, that under the terms Judah and Jerusalem are comprehended the chosen people of God under the New Covenant. These were scattered abroad by the heathen emperors at Rome,

* Prideaux's Connection, pt. 1. b. 7, and the authorities there cited.

† Prideaux, pt. 2. b. 2 & 3. 1 Maccabees, i. 18.

in many oppressive, cruel, and bloody persecutions. Nor is it to be forgotten that the empire after having been broken up and dissolved sprang to life again as a spiritual dominion, and in that resuscitated state scattered the true children and people of God, whose consciences refused submission to its false doctrines, its superstitious practices, its tyrannical pretensions, and revived idolatries.

Hence it appears that the subjects signified by two of the horns would be immediately understood by Zechariah and the Jews of his time. For the Assyrian empire merging in the Babylonian (which in the bible are regarded and mentioned as one) had many years before scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem; and that people were then, as to the far greater part of them, existing in a state of dispersion, and were all subject to the government of the Persian empire. These were matters of past fact and present experience, in which the Jews of Zechariah's days could not be deceived. But those two empires were certainly the first two of the four kingdoms, which had been twice predicted in the book of Daniel; and therefore it was a prompt conclusion, of which no reasonable doubt could be entertained, that the two last horns, represented the two last and yet future powers foretold by

the same prophet, that is to say, the Macedonian and the Roman empires.

Now since at the period of Zechariah's vision, the second horn was existing and flourishing in the plenitude of might and grandeur; and two more were yet in a state of expectancy, the number exactly coincided with that of the troops of the mystic horsemen in the first scene. But the office of that angelic host, as may be collected from their own words, compared with those of their divine captain, was to inspect and make report on the state of human affairs, to regulate and controul them with a special regard to the safety and progressive welfare of God's people, and to effect the decline and final overthrow of the nations, which should in succession shake the sceptre over them. Hence it was evident, that each of the three troops of horse, represented an assemblage of spiritual agents, commissioned in its proper turn to effect the dissolution of one of the three remaining empires; the first, as we now know, of the Persian, the second of the Macedonian, and the third of the Roman. Therefore the second part of the vision, inasmuch as it pointed out the subjects, on which the angelic horsemen were to act, did certainly answer the purpose and probably was intended, as before mentioned, to answer the purpose, of an explanation of those

interesting but mysterious symbols in the first part.

But if this part of the vision had concluded here, it might have been imagined, if not by the prophet, at least by his readers, that the deliverance of God's people and the subversion of the powers, who scattered them, were to be effected by the agency of angels in some preternatural and miraculous manner. It was expedient to prevent so erroneous a conclusion; and therefore in the two next verses the ruin of the four horns is represented as brought about by human agents, and of course by ordinary means. This also the Jews would be prepared to understand, for since they had already witnessed the fall of the Babylonian empire by the hands of man, and were thereby enabled to apply the first of the ensuing emblems to its proper subject, they would readily understand, that the succeeding kingdoms would come to their end in a similar way, by means of human instruments impelled and directed by angelic ministers under the supreme providence of God.

20. Moreover the Lord shewed me four work-
21. men. Then said I, "What come these to do?" And he spake unto me, saying, "These are the horns which scattered Judah, so that a man did not lift up his head; and these

are come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up the horn over the land of Judah to scatter it."

Zechariah informs us, that it was the Lord, Jehovah, who shewed him this portion of the vision. It should seem that the interpreting angel was not commissioned to raise the images presented to the prophet's mind, but only to point them out and give the explanation. The prior and higher office the Lord reserved to himself. The manner, in which the prophet expresses himself, indicates, that Jehovah was present, as I apprehend he was, through the whole of the vision, in the person of the Angel, who bears that title in the first part. That He had the power to affect the prophet's mind, as he saw fit, is certain; that it was consistent with his office and character, as patron and protector of God's people; to do it, is also certain, and that he would condescend to do it, is no less certain, since he deigned even to perform the office of interpreter; for although at the outset of the vision the interpreting angel said, in answer to Zechariah's first question, "I will shew thee what these be," yet it was the Angel of Jehovah, that is to say, Jehovah himself, who took up the interpretation and conveyed it to the prophet. But that the Lord is the person, to whom

Zechariah here applies for a solution of his doubts and from whom he receives that solution, I neither affirm nor think. For we find, that not only in the first part, but in every instance throughout the vision, where the prophet requests information, except in the single instance of the measuring angel, his request is addressed to the interpreter and from him the information is received; whereas during the absence of the interpreter, which occurs in the third and fourth parts, he never requests information at all. Hence we may conclude, that he intended us to collect from the general course of his narrative, that upon this occasion also his question was proposed and the answer received in the usual way.

Our english version instead of "workmen" has rendered the original word "carpenters," in which it has followed the Septuagint; Vitringa gives us "smiths," and Dr. Blaney, following Michaelis, has translated it "ploughmen." I have copied Archbishop Newcome in rendering it by a term of wider signification, workmen. Such is the simple and general meaning of the original word; and when it is used in any one of the particular senses above mentioned, it receives it only from the context*.

* Recte et vere hæc sub unam, artificis, artis periti, notionem alii jam collegerunt, &c. Michaelis Supplementa ad Lex. Heb. p. 962.

Zechariah does not ask, who the workmen are or what they signify; but that question is involved in the other, "What come these to do?" for the actions of those artificers must determine their character and office. The answer accordingly, after repeating with strong emphasis by way of introduction what had been said concerning the horns, informs the prophet that these are come to fray or scare them away.

Dr. Blaney* has expressed himself, as much offended with the image of fraying or scaring

* The following is Dr. Blaney's version. "And these are come sharpening their coulter, for to use upon the horns of the nations." Three different steps are taken to arrive at this version. By the first the letter Resh in the לחורר is changed into Daleth; the change being grounded upon the great similarity of the letter admitted to that removed, and justified by the authority of the LXX. By the second, the vowel points of the word אחר are displaced and others substituted. By the third, the word הוא is deprived of the meaning commonly ascribed to it in the Lexicons and versions.

To the first thing proposed it is sufficient to reply, that conjectures however happy or probable cannot be admitted into the text of scripture; and that the authority of the septuagint alone is far from being sufficient to justify an alteration in the hebrew text; and far less so in a case, where their own is liable to objection. To the second, no objection would lie, if there were any necessity for it, or a considerable advantage accrued from it. But who will deny, that to fray or scare away horns, q. d. horned animals, is quite as good and congruous a figure, as to sharpen a coulter to use upon them? As to the third step, it is to be supposed, that when Dr. Blaney denies to the word הוא the sense of deject, he means to include in that denial the senses of jecit and project, which are so near akin to the former

away horns; and doubtless if they had appeared, as he seems to suppose, rising out of the earth, it would be incongruous enough. But if we admit the horns to have been on the heads of animals,

and of which the latter is the very sense, in which our translators have here rendered the word. In support of his denial he cites with approbation the observation of Taylor in his concordance, that "coming from π , the hand, it may signify to exercise the hand vigorously in any way according to the sense and scope of the passage." But without stopping to shew, that the opposite derivation is equally easy and probable, and is indeed maintained by Cocceius, Simonis, and Parkhurst, though it be left by Michaelis "in incertis," it is obvious to remark, that instead of taking due advantage of Taylor's observation, Dr. Blaney is contented to give the general signification of the word, without applying it "to the scope and tenor of the place;" according to which, being connected with the mention of a coulter, it should specifically be rendered, to plough up the horns, an expression little different in effect from casting them down, as might be done with equal facility "by a vigorous exercise of the hand" in many other ways. Dr. Blaney cites Jeremiah, l. 14, which when examined seems to make against him. The following is his own version of it. "Order ye against Babylon round about, all ye that bend the bow; shoot [π] at her; spare not the arrow." Doubtless that which they are exhorted not to spare, is that, upon which they are called vigorously to exercise the hand; and accordingly Dr. Blaney himself applying the word π to the scope and sense of the place, in his translation of Jeremiah, actually renders it "shoot," that is to say, cast forth, projicite, a sense which in his note on Zechariah he denies to the word. It must however be confessed that π is a word of not very frequent occurrence, except in the Hiphil form, in which it signifies to confess, to praise. In Kal it is sometimes used for the casting of lots; but since they were cast down or out of the vessels, that contained them, this use of the word plainly decides its true signification and vindicates the received translation of the passage.

and to be put by a figure for the beasts themselves, the incongruity vanishes away*. Moreover, if the workmen had been specifically carpenters, smiths, or ploughmen, furnished with proper instruments for the demolition of the horns, it is likely at least, that we should have had some account of their operations; whereas, if we understand that they came only to fray them, the silence of the prophet, as to their doing so, is explained by the facility and readiness of the act; since while the angel was speaking, the workmen would be advancing; and the beasts alarmed at their approach would take to flight, each pursued by his proper workman.

Thus the horns of the Gentiles, which had lifted up the horn, haughtily shaking the sceptre of arbitrary power, over the land of Judah to scatter it, by violence, injustice, and oppression, are represented to be scared away and cast out, driven abroad, like "the chaff of the summer threshing floors, so that no place was found for them†."

* The word חַרַּץ in the hiphil form is applied to the scaring away of animals in Deut. xxviii. 26, and Jeremiah vii. 33. In Judges viii. 12 it is applied to the panic and tumultuous rout of the kings of Midian and their army before Gideon and the Israelites. Our translators have there rendered it "discomfited" in the text and terrified in the margin.

† Daniel, ii. 35.

The prediction has been hitherto accomplished in the following manner. I. Cyrus, who is represented by the first workman, at the head of the Medes and Persians, frayed away and cast forth the first or Babylonian horn. II. Alexander the great, the antitype of the second workman, commanding the forces of Macedon and Greece, subverted the second or Persian horn. III. The line of Jewish high priests and princes, called Maccabees and Asmoneans, particularly Johannes Hyrcanus, is signified by the third workman. For in respect to Judea, they drove away and cast forth that proud oppressive horn, which the Macedonian Seleucidæ lifted up over it. But the third workman is doubtless intended to comprehend also those mighty artificers of dismay and conquest, Pompey and Augustus Cæsar, by whom the Macedonian empire was finally dissolved. IV. The horn of heathen Rome having scattered Judah and Jerusalem according to the flesh, and having lifted itself aloft over the spiritual temple and city and kingdom of the living God, to scatter them in many heavy persecutions, was in its turn grievously frayed by the ministers of the gospel, and was at length driven in dismay and cast out before that renowned christian workman, Constantine the great. Lastly, Christian Rome having relapsed

into heathenism, having also reassumed her empire, as a spiritual power and lifted up her horn to scatter the true church and people of God, has been frayed and driven off from a great part of the christian territory by those illustrious workmen, the Reformers and their disciples. From so much experience of the past we derive encouragement for the future, and look forward with lively, yet humble and reverent faith to the time, when by Christ and those who "are workers with him" and under him, the last horn, in its last form, shall fly in dismay and be utterly cast out from the whole kingdom of the chosen people of God.

PART III.

CAP. II. 1—10.

THE most explicit and absolute promises of the restoration of the temple and city of Jerusalem, with the future prosperity and exaltation of Judea, having been given in the first part of the vision, and in the second part the expulsion and overthrow of their enemies having been predicted under very apt and lively images, we ought to carry the recollection of them with us, now that we are entering upon the third part, in which the performance of those promises consequent on the extermination of those enemies in succession, is represented by a very significant figure and expressly declared by various proclamations and messages.

1. And I lifted up mine eyes and looked; and behold a man; and in his hand a measuring
2. line. Then said I, "Whither goest thou," and he said unto me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof and what the length thereof."

Since the rebuilding of their city from the ruins in which it lay was a thing very near of heart to the Jews, and made a principal part of the divine promises, "the line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem;" since it was also the event, which of all others might be expected to take place first after the expulsion and overthrow of its enemies, it is accordingly represented by the first emblem in this part of the vision. A man is seen with a measuring line, such as was used by builders and surveyors, in his hand, as if about to exercise his calling. The prophet, whose expectations had been raised and his feelings kindled by what had been before revealed, does not apply himself to the friendly aid of the interpreting angel, but at once directs his question to the object so interesting to his curiosity. "Whither goest thou?" implying plainly, what art thou going to do? The man replies, that he is going to take an accurate measure of the extent of Jerusalem. Hence it appears that at the opening of this scene or part of the vision, Jerusalem is to be considered as actually rebuilt; wherefore, the predictions it contains cannot have relation to any thing that took place during the time that the city lay in ruins.

The motive of the measurer in undertaking his task is expressed in only a general way; "to

see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof." But when the promise in cap. i. 16, is remembered, we may properly understand, that he intended to compare the dimensions of the newly restored city with that, which had been destroyed, that so he might ascertain whether the divine promise had been completely fulfilled. We should however form but an inadequate and scanty conception of his undertaking, if we were to suppose nothing more to be included in the subject of measurement than the bare extent of the city walls: we must take the word "measure" in an extended sense for numbering, reckoning, computing; and apply it to the population, the wealth, and whatever contributed to the importance and grandeur of Jerusalem. The object of the measurer then was to determine, whether the newly restored Jerusalem were equal in all respects to the ancient city.

3. And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth; and another angel went out to
4. meet him; and said unto him; "Run, speak to that young man, saying, as villages shall Jerusalem dwell for the multitude of men and of cattle within her."

On hearing the intention of the measurer declared, the interpreting angel, as if moved by the human impulse of curiosity or by deep

feeling on so interesting a subject, immediately set off to witness, perhaps to assist in the execution of the task; whence, as well as from other circumstances, we must infer, that the welfare of God's people is matter of high concern to the blessed spirits of heaven. But before he was gone out of sight, another angel stepped forth to meet and detain him, until he had received full instructions as to a message, which he was directed to carry to the measurer of the holy city.

The mode in which the second angel is brought forward, is sufficient to induce a belief, that several persons were present in the scene, who are not expressed to be so by the prophet. The Angel is said to come out or forth. Whence? Probably from some row or company of angels standing about the exalted person, who is described in the first part as the Angel of Jehóvah, but who now probably appeared in different circumstances. There may be no error in calling to mind here the vision of Micaiah, in 1 Kings, xxii. 19, or Job, i. 6; for although such a notion of a divine court is not to be insisted on as necessary to a right interpretation of the vision, yet something more than what is distinctly related in the narrative may fairly be presumed from the prophet's expressions.

The second angel having met the interpreting angel, he bids him, "Run, speak to that young man." It is commonly supposed that the interpreter is directed to deliver the message to Zechariah ; and from the use of the term young man, a guess has been made at the prophet's age when he saw the vision. But Zechariah cannot with any propriety be supposed the proper object of the message ; for the angel, who comes forth, bids the interpreter run and tell the young man ; whereas he had no need to run, or to move at all, in order to speak to Zechariah, who certainly remained where he was, hoping probably to hear the result of the measurement from the friendly interpreter on his return. Besides if Zechariah be meant by the young man, then the interpreter did not attend to the mandate of the second angel ; for he plainly appears to have quitted the prophet and not to have rejoined him, till the opening of the fifth part of the vision*.

The interpreting angel then it appears was sent after the young man, the measurer, with the view, as well of giving him some directions and assistance in the performance of his work, as of conveying to him some clearer idea of the nature, the extent, and difficulty of the task he had undertaken. And first, he is apprized that

* See the commentary and note there.

he must not estimate the population, wealth, and splendour of the new city, by the appearance which it may make upon or soon after the erection of its walls. "Jerusalem shall dwell as villages," or as our translators have rendered the words, fully expressing the sense, "shall be inhabited as towns without walls." There is plainly an opposition intended between Jerusalem, a defended city, which, while protected, is straitened and confined by walls and fortifications, and villages or unwall'd towns, which spread themselves unchecked and at will, on every side, and rambling abroad without any regular figure, are therefore not easily brought to submit to the measurer's line. Next it is added, that this extension of Jerusalem shall take place by reason of the increasing multitude of its inhabitants, who will superabound and spread themselves forth beyond any assignable limits. Cattle, as well as men, are noticed as part of the multitude, not however with any strong emphasis or for the sake of drawing the reader's attention to the subject, but merely as affording a general indication of the plenty and prosperity reigning there. Such a state of things must be the consequence of peace, liberty, and security, of entire exemption from all apprehension of civil convulsions and foreign invasion.

This being the plain literal sense of the prophecy, the question so closely connected with all predictions immediately occurs; Has it ever been accomplished? - If by accomplishment be meant a full and perfect one, we must give up the literal sense of the words; or if we contend for the latter also, we must rest satisfied with an imperfect fulfilment. Jerusalem never did dwell as villages and never was so entirely free from all internal and external causes of fear, as to warrant a description answerable to the above prediction. Although her inhabitants grew to a number beyond the capacity of the city in its ancient dimensions to supply them with dwellings, and overflowed, as has been before related, into the suburb Bezetha*, yet that would amount to only a feeble and partial accomplishment of so splendid a prophecy. Moreover, that very suburb was not considered to be in a state of security, or perhaps was rather thought to weaken the defences of the city, till it was encompassed by a wall, quite contrary to the village fashion. But why should the exact completion of this prediction in a literal sense be an object of anxious search, or the difficulty of ascertaining it a subject of disappointment? The next words plainly declare, that the safeguard and

* Page 40.

protection of this widely extended city will consist, not in that which usually forms the defence of cities, the strength of ramparts, the might of armies, and the craft of politicians, nor in any peculiar posture of human affairs, but in the invisible, though effectual protection of the Almighty himself. This sufficiently intimates to every intelligent reader, that a great part at least of the prediction is intended to be taken in a spiritual sense and is appointed to receive its accomplishment in a spiritual state of things and in spiritual blessings.

5. "For I will be unto her," saith Jehovah; "a wall of fire round about and will be the glory in the midst of her."

The wall of fire is beyond all question figurative. The Almighty will spread around her the sure defence of his superintending providence. Her enemies struck with consternation and terrors of conscience shall desist from their malevolent designs against her, or shall be consumed and destroyed by some of the innumerable means which are in the hand of the supreme disposer, if they persist to make war upon her. In like manner the glory is a figurative one. God will be really and effectually present in the rebuilt, restored city, and will manifest his presence by sufficient signs, enlightening, cherishing, and

comforting it. Since then the wall and the glory are a figurative wall and glory, it is at least consistent with analogy to believe, that the city also is in many respects at least to be considered as a figurative city, a spiritual and holy republic, under the peculiar and supreme government of Jehovah, God of hosts.

But though the prediction does thus relate to subjects, which are chiefly and ultimately of a spiritual nature, yet it is not to be restrained wholly to such. Nothing hinders, but that in its outset and during a considerable part of its progress towards completion, it may be applied to and its accomplishment be sought in the temporal Jerusalem and Israel according to the flesh. Accordingly, it is observable, that the interpreting angel is not sent to recall the measurer or to bid him desist from or even suspend his undertaking, as being in relation to a spiritual city vain and impracticable. He is rather commissioned, as has been before mentioned, to encourage, if not to aid him in the performance of his work; but at the same time he is directed to admonish him, that when by his measurement he has ascertained the accomplishment of God's promise in the restoration of his holy city, he is not to consider it as complete and final, in regard either to the prophetic word or to the divine intention.

The prediction must therefore be divided into two parts; the one, to which the emblem of the measurer chiefly, but not wholly, relates, having its appointed accomplishment in the temporal Jerusalem; the other, expressed principally in the angel's message, having it in the spiritual city of the living God. With respect to the former, there can be no difficulty in fixing its sense, and little in finding its completion also, if it has ever been completed, since it is of a literal description. Jerusalem, which at the period of the vision lay in its ruins, shall be restored to its former consideration and grandeur; not only laid out in line to the full extent of its ancient walls, but even surpassing the former city in the multitude of its inhabitants, abounding in the plenty of all good things, and flourishing as the metropolis of an extensive country, in an high degree of power, wealth, and splendour. Such a state of things is obviously not the work of a day; a long interval of time must lie between its commencement and its perfection. Accordingly the work of raising the city walls upon their old foundations and of repairing the gates, which was begun and completed by Nehemiah, as related in the commentary on the first part of the vision,* went so far towards accomplishing

* Page 36.

the prophecy in the strictness of its letter, as it made Jerusalem a defenced city, strongly marked by an external boundary and consequently capable of certain and accurate measurement. For some time the progress of the city seemed to promise a speedy completion of the prophecy in all its latitude. It increased so fast in habitations and inhabitants, that in the course of a few years it attained, as we have before seen, to an high eminence among the cities of the east.* But the favour of the Persian monarchs was capricious and precarious. It ceased with the administration of Nehemiah. No separate governor was afterwards appointed to Judea, which was thenceforth annexed to the prefecture of Syria; and in the degraded situation of subordinate provincials the Jews felt the shame, as well as the pain, of that grinding oppression, under which "no man could lift up his head" in freedom.

Since this prediction immediately follows the scene of the four horns, we may reasonably expect to find it in some measure connected therewith. Accordingly it may be remarked, that upon the removal of any one of them it always advanced a step towards completion. As it was not till after the discomfiture and destruction of

* Page 37.

the Babylonian horn, that the Jews were restored to their country and permitted to rebuild their temple and holy city, so no sooner was the horn of the great king frayed away and cast out by the victorious progress of Alexander the Great, than Judea felt the advantage of the change. That mighty conqueror having advanced to Jerusalem treated the Jews with singular distinction and respect, and conferred upon them several privileges of high importance, and such as a conquered and dependant people had little reason to expect; especially by exempting them from taxes in the sabbatical year and by permitting them to live after their own laws*. These privileges were not only of the greatest value to that part of the people who were resident in Judea, by conferring on them the chief blessings of civil liberty, with full freedom and ease of conscience, and even much encouragement in the service and worship of God according to the law of Moses; but they reflected credit, consequence, and honour on their country, and must have acted as strong inducements to those, who could conveniently leave the seats of their dispersion, to return to the land of their fathers. Hence Jerusalem in particular received an accession of dignity, opulence, and importance, and felt less short of the extent of the measurer's line.

* Prideaux's Connection, pt. 1. b. 7.

The reign of Alexander however quickly passed away, and the partitioners of his empire lifted up their horn over Judea to scatter it, as has been before related. It was not indeed under a foreign yoke, that Jerusalem was appointed to attain to that extent and flourishing state, which would answer the computation of the angelic measurer. But when the Macedonian horn was frayed and cast out before those heroes of religion and true patriotism, the Maccabees, Jerusalem, as we have also seen before,* blessed with freedom and security, filled the extent of her walls with citizens, resumed her royal insignia under native princes,† overpassed her former boundaries, and as the head of a populous and extensive territory, rose to a state of opulence, power, dignity, and splendour, which she had not known since the division of Israel and Judah.

Thus was that part of the prediction, which related to the temporal Jerusalem, and which required a literal completion, fairly, fully, and gloriously accomplished. In that respect the vision goes no farther. Being intended for the consolation and encouragement of the Jews, it is of course silent as to the calamitous and terrible

* Pages 38, 39, 40.

† This took place when Aristobulus succeeded his father, John Hyrcanus, in the year before Christ 107.

catastrophe that awaited their city. Nor indeed could that event have been comprehended in the prediction consistently with its scope and tenor ; for it relates only to the chosen city of God, which Jerusalem before that time had ceased to be. It had been rejected and cast off ; and the spiritual Jerusalem had been founded and built. To that consequently the divine promises are to be considered as transferred ; and the full and splendid accomplishment of them is to be expected on the final removal of the fourth horn, which for a longer or shorter term is permitted to exercise power over it.

This observation brings us to the second part of the prediction, expressed by the message, which the angel commanded the interpreter to deliver to the measurer of the city, "Jerusalem shall dwell as villages." When these words are once conceived to have a spiritual signification, the image conveyed by them immediately dilates itself far beyond an assemblage of public edifices and private habitations, to a vast and unnumbered community, spread abroad over the surface of the earth, and united, as not by local neighbourhood, so neither by the mutual interests of worldly policy, but by an high and holy sense of their common spiritual needs, and of their joint and several participation in common spiritual

blessings. Such a community plainly and fully answers to the image of Jerusalem, the city of God, dwelling as villages, without any fixed lines and limits to abridge and hem in its growing greatness. To this we are to add the idea of complete security, of undisturbed and durable peace, under the care and protection of its most high and omnipotent sovereign. As his watchful providence around constitutes its saving defence, so his presence within is its glory, the fountain of intellectual light and knowledge, of moral virtue and purity, of confidence, comfort, and felicity, to all its inhabitants.

“I will be unto her a wall of fire round about and will be the glory in the midst of her.” Taken in their full meaning, these words are vastly too august to warrant us in expecting the full accomplishment of the prediction, till after the discomfiture and demolition of the last enemy, which shall lift up the horn to scatter the people of God. Yet it does not hence follow, that the accomplishment may not begin long before. The work of building, peopling, and thoroughly restoring the temporal Judah and Jerusalem was a work of time, and was impeded and retarded at intervals by many conflicts and reverses. So too the foundations of the spiritual city may be laid, and consequently the fulfilment of the

prediction be commenced, ages anterior to its ultimate perfection and consummation. All the intermediate time it will be in a state of progress; perhaps of difficult, laborious, imperceptible progress; sometimes flourishing in temporal as well as spiritual strength and elevation, at other times, weak, fainting, exhausted, as if ready to sink; but still enduring; defended by its surrounding wall of fire and enlightened by its interior glory, though they be not revealed to the perception, the admiration and reverence of the inconsiderate world.

But before we come to particulars, it will be necessary to consider farther the sense, in which God is said to be the Glory in the midst of the spiritual Jerusalem. The words plainly contain an allusion to the pillar of cloud and fiery radiance, which in the journies of the Israelites abode over the tabernacle in the midst of the congregation, and also to the token of the divine presence in the Holy of Holies. These appearances are called in scripture the Glory of Jehovah, as being the signs and manifestations, that he was in the midst of his people, defending, instructing and blessing, warning, correcting, and punishing them. To the same purpose God here declares that he will be with the spiritual Jerusalem, but in a higher degree and with more

blessed effects, which though invisible to the eye of sense shall be real and effectual to every saving end.

Such a glory is the subject of prediction in other parts of the prophetic writings. Isaiah foretells, that "Jehovah will create over all the seat* of Mount Zion and over her congregation, a cloud and smoke by day and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; yea, the glory shall be a covering over all." In like manner, God speaking by the prophet Haggai†, declares, "I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of hosts:" and again, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith Jehovah of hosts."

These passages alike speak of a glory, a manifestation of the divine presence, superior in brightness and efficacy to that, with which the Israelites had been favoured in the times of God's greatest kindness; and they converge to the one grand focus of the prophetic scriptures, the incarnation of the Godhead in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet they are not altogether

* Isaiah, iv. 5. The english version reads "every dwelling place." Only one is meant, the habitation of God, (see Exodus, xv, 17,) the whole of which and its congregation, (in the singular number,) the whole church, shall be covered with his glory. Bishop Lowth would upon very slender authority reject or change its place.

† Haggai, ii, 7 & 9.

similar. For Isaiah alludes to the cloud and flame seen over the tabernacle in the wilderness, whereas Haggai refers to the shekinah, the visible token of God's presence in the first temple. This difference in the allusions bespeaks some difference in the subjects of discourse. In Haggai the prophetic spirit contemplates Christ personally present in the temple, bodily conversant among men in Jerusalem. In Isaiah the spiritual presence of Christ with his mystical body, the catholic church, is the subject of prediction. In Zechariah the declaration of the angel is intended to comprehend both;—both the allusions and both the subjects.

It has been shewn, that the prediction figured by the man with the measurer's line, and delivered in the message of the angel, was punctually fulfilled with respect to the temporal Jerusalem, so far as it required a literal completion; but nothing has been said to shew, that, even with regard to that earthly city, it included a spiritual signification and received a correspondent accomplishment therein. Yet since in our conception of the measurement of Jerusalem we are to include whatever constituted the importance and grandeur of the city; since, also, the temple was by far the most magnificent and important thing in the city, and

since the ark of the covenant with the shekinah or glory over it was the most illustrious thing in the temple, the renovated Jerusalem and its temple would have fallen very short of the ancient line of measurement, had nothing been found in them to answer to or make up for those extraordinary tokens of the divine favour. Now we know, that if there were any ark at all in the second temple,* the original ark made by Moses and the shekinah were certainly absent from it, and that their absence was a subject of deep regret to the Jews. Hence we may justly presume that the measurer also would have been sorely disappointed, had he stretched out his line over such a vacancy as that. Therefore he

* We nowhere read, that the ark of the covenant was restored to the Jews on their return from the captivity, yet if it had been one among the five thousand four hundred vessels of gold and silver mentioned in Ezra, i, 7—11. v. 14. vi. 5, and in 1 Esdras, ii. 13, 14. iv. 44, 57, it was a thing of too great importance not to have been particularly distinguished. The Jews also in common maintain, that the ark was wanting in the second temple, and Buxtorf, in his *Historia Arcæ fœderis*, cap, xxii, gives us the stories they have invented about its concealment and future restitution. But there is another question: Was there any ark in the second temple to supply the place of the original one? Most of the Jews maintain the negative; but Dean Prideaux strongly contends, that there must have been such an ark, and that it was exhibited in the triumph of Titus, though he allows, that they are mistaken who have supposed it to be represented in the sculptures on his arch. *Connection*, pt. 1, b. 3. However that might be, there was certainly no shekinah, no tables of the law, nor other accompaniments of the first ark in the second temple.

is graciously informed, that there would be no reason for disappointment or dejection on that account; since so far from being deficient in glory, the new Jerusalem should even surpass the former; for that instead of a symbol only, the Lord himself would be her Glory.

But this glory is only to be sought and only to be found in the spiritual glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, when he filled the temple and glorified the city with his divine presence. Certainly the blessed Son of God himself, performing his unparalleled works of power and goodness and acting therein with supreme authority, binding and loosing the spirits of darkness, forgiving all manner of sin, healing all manner of infirmities, recalling the souls of the departed to their former vessels of flesh, teaching the lessons of wisdom and the doctrines of truth in the language of literal plainness or of striking parable, and with the winning simplicity of sincere affection, conversing among men with all the ease and familiarity of an equal, yet with all the dignity and majesty of a sovereign, was eminently and in a degree beyond all comparison the glory of the temple, God in the midst of Jerusalem. It was however, a spiritual glory, discernible only in the greatness and blessedness of its effects; but so great and blessed were they,

that the visible glory in the camp of Israel and the temple of Solomon fade to a dim tinct in comparison with them. They appear, as "having no glory, by reason of the glory which excelleth." It was in this regard, that Simeon spake of the infant Jesus as "the glory of his people Israel," that St. John remarks, "he manifested forth his glory," and that he himself on his final departure from the temple declared to Jerusalem, that "her house was left desolate," without any glory or divine inhabitant. Yet even these demonstrations of power, goodness, and wisdom did not constitute the chief glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. He himself has fixed it to the surpassing honours of his crucifixion and his resurrection. When the traitor Judas went forth to perpetrate his treason, the divine son of man knowing his purpose, in full self-possession and equanimity declared, "Now is the son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself and shall straightway glorify him." Such was the spiritual glory in the midst of temporal Jerusalem.

But temporal Jerusalem perversely shut her eyes to the glory thus revealed in the midst of her; and that being withdrawn, her wall of fire also, the divine protection, departed from her

and left her naked to her enemies. In the mean time the spiritual Jerusalem had been founded and reared, and stood ready to receive both. In her, accordingly, the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ is seen by the eye of faith far brighter than it ever shone in the temple or tabernacle of old, being wholly unalloyed by any mixture of temporal shew or grandeur. She has not and boasts not any other glory, but that which is pure and incorruptible, the very sun of righteousness, shining for ever and ever, without cloud, film, or speck. He is made unto her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; the author and fountain of all her blessings, the ground of her hope, the crown of her rejoicing. He is her vital warmth and vigour, infusing his own sacred spirit through the whole body into every joint and member, every congregation, every minister, every individual, "according to the effectual working in the measure of every part." Christ is also her wall of fire round about; he has protected his church and brought it off victorious from the bloody attempts, which the fourth horn has at different times and in different ways made to crush and destroy it. Being head over all things to the church, and having all power committed to him both in heaven and earth, he has continually

extended and expanded it, yet still as villages without walls, unconfined to people or to country, ever open also to hostile attacks, though ever rising superior to them. The acts and epistles of the apostles plainly declare, how equal was the defence of the church to her needs, in the first years of her infancy, amid the dangers that threatened to overwhelm her. Ecclesiastical history attests the continued enmity of the world-ruling powers of darkness for two centuries and a half afterwards, and the persevering resistance of the church against them, during which she often appeared like her illustrious apostle, "persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed*." Protected by her wall of fire around, animated and enlightened by her glory within, she continued to spread herself through the world, as leaven through the lump, till the Roman empire was leavened into the church of Christ. The same process has ever since been carried on in the world under the providential administration of her divine head, who makes all things work together for her final good and blessedness. But ecclesiastical

* Mr. Gibbon, it is well known, endeavours to account for the success of christianity by five causes independent of any divine aid. The reader, who would see the weakness of the eloquent historian's arguments exposed with acuteness, fairness, and brevity, will do well to consult the third sermon of Dr. White's Bampton Lectures.

history has hitherto traced only the rise and progress of the spiritual Jerusalem; her perfection is yet future; her glory has not yet shone forth to the eyes of the world in that full brightness which it is destined to attain.

The message addressed by the angel, who came forth, through the interpreting angel, to the young man with the measuring line, ended with the fifth verse. The interpreter, it is reasonable to believe, departed with it; and consequently Zechariah was left without his friendly assistance, which however was the less necessary to explain predictions so intelligible, as those which next follow, and figures, which either occur elsewhere in a plainer form, or are interpreted in the supplemental part.

6. *Ho! ho! come forth** and flee from the land of the north, saith Jehovah: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of heaven, saith Jehovah.

Though the message has been delivered and the interpreting angel charged with it has quitted the divine court and presence, the subject is

* "Ho! ho! flee ye also." Dr. Blaney's translation. I have adhered to the english version, which adds, "*come forth*" in italics, as if understood, but in reality to explain the interjections and to avoid the baldness incident to connecting them with the following verb by the copulative "and." וַיֵּן may however be considered as a verb of compellation and may therefore be very properly coupled with the following verb by Vau.

not lost sight of. The same angel (for no change of the speaker is intimated) now proceeds to publish three proclamations, which are delivered in succession without any intervening portion of narrative or any words of introduction. Like a man, whose feelings are warmed and elevated by glad tidings of good things to come, he breaks out in a style of rapture, crying aloud to the dispersed Jews, as if they were present to hear the dictates of inspiration. These the prophet doubtless understood, were to be communicated in his writings, as exhortations and encouragements to his countrymen in general, and especially to that great body of them, who still continued in the land of the north, which is a prophetic name for the territory of the Assyrian or Babylonian empire. They are earnestly exhorted to flee from thence; but the place, whither they are to flee, is not expressed. Hence probably the interpretation has arisen, which represents the first proclamation, as only a warning to the Jews resident in Babylon to escape from the calamities impending over that city from its approaching siege by Darius Hystaspides. Yet such is not the reason assigned for the removal of the Jews by the angel of the proclamation; nor indeed can such have been the object and end of it, because being connected with and

arising out of the foregoing message, it must relate to a period, when the new city will be surrounded with walls, and made securely and comfortably habitable; but that did not take place till many years after the capture and pillage of Babylon by Darius. At the same time the proclamation does not contain or imply any exhortation to the Jews there to return and inhabit Jerusalem, as rebuilt by Nehemiah. No word is used, that can be construed to indicate such an intention; and if any such were discernible, we should have to contend with a considerable difficulty; since in that case no reason could be given for addressing the exhortation to the Jews in Babylonia only, to the exclusion, at least neglect, of all those, who in the next words are described to be spread abroad to the four winds of heaven.

So far is the proclamation from inviting them to return to Judea, that the very reason assigned for the fervent exhortation addressed to the Jews in Babylonia, to flee from thence, is expressly, that the Jews in general are dispersed into many other countries. Now it must be confessed, that at first sight there seems a strange inconsequence in saying, I have spread you abroad into all lands, therefore flee from the north. But the connection between the exhortation and the argument

will be immediately discerned, when the latter is interpreted as a prediction, that the Jews should be dispersed not in Babylonia alone, but through all the countries of Europe and Asia. If it be objected to this interpretation, that it implies rather punishment than blessing, it may be sufficiently vindicated by the two following observations. First, it is to be remarked, that the word "spread" is not used here in a bad sense, for scatter or dissipate, but in a good one, for extend or expand, which is the proper signification of the Hebrew word*. There can be no doubt, that at the period of Zechariah's vision and for many years afterwards, by far the greater portion of the Jewish dispersion was to be found in Babylonia and the adjacent regions. But it was the purpose of God, to open a much wider field to the sojourning of his people, as missionaries to the heathen. Therefore he does not here speak of scattering them, as in anger

* Parkhurst in Lex. cites two texts in which וַיִּפְּרֹץ is used in the sense of scattering. One of these, Psalm lxxviii. 15, does not answer the purpose. The word is there used in its usual sense of expanding, extending, and is applied to the spreading far and wide of royal dominion in the Lord's inheritance. In much the same sense it is here applied to the spreading of the people of God over the earth, by a peaceful and voluntary dispersion, not by a stormy, hostile scattering. I believe there are only two texts, in which וַיִּפְּרֹץ is so used, the one, Ezekiel, xxxiv. 12, cited by Parkhurst, the other, Ezekiel, xvii. 21.

and for the sake of punishment, but of spreading them far and wide, as instruments and messengers of good, as faithful subjects and soldiers of his kingdom, which they were to be employed in extending among men, to the increase of their own happiness and honour. Therefore also, instead of bidding them return to Judea, the angel exhorts them only to flee from the north, that so they may be ready to fulfil the divine counsel concerning them. Secondly, the verb "spread," though in the past tense, must be understood in the future, according to a mode of speaking very common in the prophets, of which several instances may be seen in Isaiah, liii, alone*. I have spread you in my decree, that is, I have decreed to spread you, or I will spread you. The proclamation then may be paraphrased thus: "Think not, O my people! of fixing yourselves and your inheritances in the land of Babylon. You must quickly prepare to depart thence; for I have fully purposed to send you forth into all countries, spreading you, as the four winds of heaven, that ye may be the means of conveying to mankind spiritual knowledge, rational fears, and lofty hopes, as is suitable to the children of that great patriarch, in whose

* See Mr. Whittaker's historical and critical enquiry into the interpretation of the hebrew scriptures, page 226.

seed all the families of the earth are to be blessed." Thus the prediction is found to correspond with what we know to have been the great end proposed and attained by the dispersion of the Jews, namely, to diffuse among the nations the knowledge of the true God and the expectation of the Redeemer. They were the appointed "witnesses of God," as they are expressly termed by the prophet *Isaiah**. Accordingly they are here sent forth from Babylon with a commission to bear this testimony all abroad, like the four winds of heaven, stretching "their line through all the earth" and carrying "their words unto the end of the world." Hence doubtless proceeded that "ancient and steady opinion," which prevailed throughout the east and which is recorded by *Tacitus* and *Suetonius*†, "that it was decreed in the book of fate, that a sovereign, to come forth out of Judea, should acquire supreme

* *Isaiah*, xliii. 10, 12. xliv. 8.

† *Tacitus* hist. b. 5. c. 13. *Suetonius* in *Vespasiano*, c. 4. *Casaubon* remarks, that from the two Roman historians having expressed the oracle in the same words, "*Judea profecti rerum potirentur*," one may probably trace it through the common report to *Micah*, v. 2, where the expression coming forth is applied to the future king of Israel. But it may with equal probability be referred to the prediction of *Balaam*, in *Numbers*, xxiv. 17. 19. Though I have joined *Tacitus* with *Suetonius*, it should be noticed, that the former speaks of the persuasion, only as it prevailed among the Jews.

dominion upon earth ;” and hence too the quick perception, which the magi had, of the signification of the miraculous star and their ready obedience to its summons.

In the next verse another exhortation or proclamation to the same purpose is given in an equally animated style and enforced by similar arguments, which are expressed at greater length and branched out into a number of particulars.

7. Ho ! Zion, deliver thyself, thou that inhabitest the daughter of Babylon. For thus saith Jehovah of hosts ; After the glory, hath he sent me unto the nations, which have spoiled you : for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his own eye. For, behold, I will shake mine hand over them, and they shall become a spoil to their servants : and ye shall know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me.

The seventh verse is parallel with the first clause of the sixth. To Zion, the church of God, the proclamation is addressed with great emphasis ; deliver thyself, haste away from the land in which thou art now detained, and in which thou canst never fulfil the honourable destiny, which the Lord hath prepared for thee. It is likely, as before noticed, that many of the Jewish captivity had acquired valuable posses-

sions in Babylonia, which they were loth to quit; hence the urgency of the exhortation. Whatever they might possess there was little better than a badge and token of captivity, from which they should in all reason be earnest to detach themselves; especially considering the high fortune, to which they are called in the following words, which are expressly declared by the angel to be the words of Jehovah himself.

“After the glory hath he sent me.” The verb* being without a nominative expressed, it may be taken impersonally, as is common in the Hebrew tongue, and then the sense will be the same, as if it had been said in the passive voice, “I am sent:” But the impersonal use of the verb can hardly have place here; for in the passage itself at the end of the ninth verse, the verb is repeated in the same form, with the same pronominal affix of the first person, and with the proper nominative expressed, “Jehovah of hosts,” which is to be borrowed thence for this place, or is to be considered as the antecedent to the pronoun he. Thus it appears that Jehovah of hosts is sent by Jehovah of hosts.

* I must refer the reader to the note placed at the end of this part of the vision; it having been found too long to be inserted at the bottom of the page.

Such a passage, as a learned author* remarks, ought not "for a moment to excite astonishment in a christian; knowing as he must, that the second Person in the Trinity, who is so often said to be sent by the Father, is not only called in the new testament God, but also by a name, which is allowed to be equivalent to the Lord of hosts, the Almighty." Accordingly in Isaiah, xlvi. 16, we find the Lord of hosts declaring in words nearly parallel with those of Zechariah, "the Lord God, Adonai Jehovah, and his Spirit, hath sent me." Upon which the commentator Lowth remarks, that "we can understand the words of none other, but the second person of the blessed trinity, who was sent into the world by the Father and anointed to his prophetic office by the Holy Spirit."

The Lord of hosts hath sent me after the glory; these words are thought to be attended with considerable difficulty, which however, it is hoped, will not be found so stubborn, but that it may be removed without any great expense of time or labour. The glory, after which Jehovah declares, that he is sent, must be the same glory, as that mentioned in the fifth verse; for there is not the least hint given of any other glory being

* Dr. Eveleigh's sermon on the plurality of persons in the godhead, p. 2.

intended. But the promise given in the fifth verse is of so lofty a nature, that the full performance of it is plainly incompatible with the co-existence of any power, that shall be able to domineer over the people of God. Hence it might have been imagined, that before the introduction of the Messiah, as the glory of Israel, the last of the four horns would be frayed and utterly cast out; or at least that Messiah himself would remove it out of the way in preparation to erect his kingdom. In order then to prevent or to correct so great and pernicious a misapprehension, the Lord declares, that the Father will not send him against the nations that spoil his people, until *after the glory*. Messiah must first come and fill the second temple with the majesty of his presence; he must be seen and acknowledged by the eye and voice of faith, as the glory in the midst of the spiritual Jerusalem; he must lay the foundations of his kingdom and spread out its provinces afar, before he will go against the oppressors of his people, to subdue them to his dominion.

The important circumstance of time thus announced by the express declaration of Jehovah, is the argument alleged by the angel for the departure of the Jews from Babylon; and a very weighty and persuasive argument it is. For

when it is taken in connection with the first proclamation, it manifestly appears, that the Jews were appointed to spread themselves abroad over the earth, that so, when Messiah should actually be sent, there might be found in every region servants and soldiers of the Lord, prepared to fight his battles and gain his victories over the nations, that spoiled them. The proclamation is not merely exhortatory, but prophetic, and the event answered to the prediction. Before Christ came the Jews were spread abroad through all the provinces of the Roman empire. The apostles found synagogues of them in every city and town of consequence. To these they first addressed the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified but risen Saviour, and though the greater part scoffed and rejected the word, yet many believed, and became the channel, through which the waters of life were conveyed to their gentile neighbours.

John the Baptist indeed is predicted by the prophets Isaiah and Malachi, as the herald and forerunner of the Christ, sent "to prepare his way, to fill up the vallies and level the mountains;" to remove the obstructions presented to the progress of the gospel by the national divisions, the barbarism, and the ignorance of mankind; that so "the glory of Jehovah might be

revealed and all flesh might see it together." But it is not meant hereby, that the Baptist himself should effect these mighty ends by his own personal ministry and exertions, which were in fact confined to a short time and narrow space. He was rather sent to publish and announce the fact, that the time of Jehovah's coming to be the glory of his people was arrived, and that the way was actually made ready for his appearance. The Roman empire by its arms had conquered, and by its arts and literature had in a great degree civilized the world; it had broken down the barriers of national divisions and distinctions, and by common government, languages, and laws, had bound the nations in union, while it forced them into subjection; whence mutual commerce and intercourse were promoted and facilitated. Thus in no small measure was the way prepared for the apostles to carry abroad the news of salvation through Jesus Christ. But the one great advantage, which they possessed in making their message intelligible and acceptable to mankind, was the residence of the Jews in the many countries which they visited. By their conversation, by their peculiar customs, and by their religious worship, and above all as the keepers of the oracles of God, they had paved the way for the conversion of the nations.

Hence "Parthians, Medes and Elamites," Egyptians, Greeks, Italians, were ready to receive a law, which came forth from Jerusalem, and to bend the knee to a spiritual sovereign, the lineal heir to the throne of Jewish kings.

Then it was, that the prophecy of Haggai was fulfilled, "I will shake all the nations, and they shall come to the desire* of all nations," that is to Jerusalem, the spiritual city of the Lord God of hosts. Accordingly they did so come: They came to the christian church, that they might

* Haggai, ii. 7. Jerusalem, of which Judea was the head, is called the land of desire in Psalm, cvi. 24. Jeremiah, iii. 19. Zéchariah, vii 14. Compare the description given of it in Deut. viii. 7, and following verses. Whatever honourable and glorious appellations are conferred on the earthly country and city, are more eminently applicable to the spiritual. Our english version renders *ובאו חמדת כל הגוים* "and the desire of all nations shall come." But in rendering the words thus, a singular substantive is made the nominative to a plural verb. Pressed by this strong objection, others have translated the words, "the desires, meaning the desirable things, the riches of all nations shall come;" wherein a singular noun is transformed into a plural. Avoiding both these difficulties, and adhering, as I believe, to the sense of the passage, I have rendered the clause, as if the prefix *ב* or *ל* were understood after the verb, a mode of construction which is too common to need example in proof of it. *Ellipsis præpositionis non infrequens.* Buxtorfii Thes. Gr. p. 475. The learned Dr. Pye Smith, in his *Scripture Testimony to the messiah*, vol. 1, p. 325, defends the common version by a reference to Dathe's *Notæ criticæ in Haggæum*, a work which I know only from his citation, who contends that "any difficulty from the verb being plural and the nominative singular, ceases on its being considered, that the verb to a substantive in regimine with another, often agrees with the number of the latter instead of the former," and cites 2 Samuel, x. 9. Job,

there hear the words of life and receive the everlasting and inviolable law of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, proceeding from him who was the glory in the midst of her. Then too that remarkable prediction of Jeremiah* began to receive its accomplishment; in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind (or as Dr. Blaney renders, neither shall it be the delight of their heart) neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither† shall any

xv. 20. Isaiah, xxv. 3. The same rule is to be found in *Glassii Philolog. sac. lib. 3. tract. 3. cap. 54.* with the first two examples. But not one of these instances is in point. In the first, "faces of war," is a mere periphrasis for war; or it may be said that the verb agrees with the sense, instead of the expression. In the second, the singular noun is a noun of multitude, and consequently may be joined with a plural verb. And in the last, "the city of the terrible nations," is identified with the terrible nations themselves, or the city signifies the inhabitants of the city, and so becomes a noun of multitude. Thus may these three instances be reduced to grammatical analogy; but vain would be any similar attempt on the text in Haggai.

* Jeremiah xl. 16, 17.

† "Neither shall that be done any more." English translation. Dr. Blaney renders, "neither shall it be made any more;" meaning, "that the ark once lost was never to be made again." Notes on Jeremiah. Buxtorf notices the same rendering with approbation; but I incline to that given by the commentator Lowth on the text. The verb *ny* is not unfrequently applied to sacrifices and religious rites.

more sacrifice be offered there ; ” signifying, as Buxtorf remarks*, that the ark and all that appertained to it or was connected with it, the law, the old covenant, the tokens and shadows of the divine presence dwelling among men, and all the religious rites celebrated at it, were to be abolished and taken away, and that a new form of the church and of divine worship would take place. “ At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord ; and all the nations shall be gathered into it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem.” That is to say, the ark of the covenant, the ancient throne of the divine majesty, being removed, the manifestation of God’s presence and the seat of his worship shall be no more restricted to one particular spot, or to one special people, but wheresoever the church shall be found duly worshipping God according to his institution, there He will be present, and will set up the throne of his glory†.

The Roman empire however as a political body, both in its rulers and in its people, refused to accept the gospel of peace, and lifted up the horn against the people of God, spoiling them, and treating them as slaves and criminals. The Lord of hosts therefore, having long before appeared the glory of temporal Jerusalem, and

* *Historia Arcæ fœderis*, c. 23, p. 219. † *Idem*, p. 222.

having been long since known and confessed by his people as the glory of the spiritual city, was at length sent to make their oppressors and spoilers feel, that "he who touched them, touched the apple of his own eye," wounded himself in the most tender and most important member of his body. The period of his mission may be dated somewhere between the years 185 and 192. Rome had previously attained under the Antonines the acme of her elevation, and her decline is dated by its historian from the reign of Commodus. From that time the Lord began to "wave his hand*" in vengeance over her, to act against her by his four sore judgements, of war, civil and foreign, of famine, of pestilence, and of the beasts of the earth†. By these, in the course of about 140 years, he consumed and exhausted the strength of that terrible Colossus, which bestrode the world in the double pride and glory of civil and military tyranny, and of religious darkness and idolatry. The preparations made for its final overthrow, were extensive and effectual. The christians, increased and multiplied throughout the empire, were become a powerful

* The phrase of waving the hand over is shewn in the note at the end of this part to be applicable only to acts of Almighty God.

† These are the means of destruction specified in the second, third, and fourth seals in the Revelation of St. John, in conformity with what we read in Ezekiel, xiv. 21.

body, able by their united force to incline the balance of conflicting parties, when the vital struggle took place between Constantine and his heathen adversaries. Although personal safety and imperial power, not the propagation of christianity, were the objects of Constantine in his wars, yet the latter followed as a collateral effect. The christians, who had experienced the justice and lenity, and, I may say, the favour and indulgence both of Constantine and of his father Constantius Chlorus, promoted not only by their wishes and their prayers, but by their active exertions and by their arms, the cause of their friend and protector, became at length their convert and brother; and with their assistance thus prepared to his hand, the ancient fabric of heathen empire fell to the ground before him. Then the nations, who had spoiled the people of God, became a spoil to their servants, to those, whom they had treated with contempt and insult, violence and cruelty, "as the most despicable portion of their slaves;" then the Roman empire became a spoil to the spiritual children of Abraham, the true Israel of God, to the citizens of that city, to which God is a wall of fire round about and the glory in the midst of her.

It is worthy of observation, that the people of the empire signified by the fourth horn, which before was said to "scatter" Judah and Jerusa-

less, are here said to be "the spoilers of them." The reason of this change in the expression probably is, that so the retribution may be expressed by the same word as the wrong. This could not have been done, had the former word, scattering, been retained here; for the christians on obtaining possession of imperial power could not be said to scatter the heathen. But they spoiled them; and therefore the heathen also are here described as having "spoiled," instead of scattered God's inheritance. The christians are truly said to have spoiled the heathen, when they took possession of the supreme government, the offices of state, and all the important posts, civil, military, and ecclesiastical, which had hitherto been in heathen hands. They farther spoiled them by turning the idolatrous temples into christian churches; and above all by depriving Rome of her supremacy, as the queen of cities and head of empire, when Constantinople was made in point of dignity her rival, and in point of imperial favour her superior. Thus did the Lord of hosts, the Son of God, go forth after the glory, shake his hand over the heathen empire, break its horn, and make the imperial people a spoil to their servants.

"And ye shall know, that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me." When these things are come to

pass, then the people of God shall know assuredly, that He hath sent the deliverer unto Sion, and that not by their own power or exertions they have achieved so great a work, but by the mighty hand and the stretched out arm of Him; "who had a favour unto them."

Upon these words the same question has been raised, as upon those in the foregoing verse; who is the speaker to whom they are to be attributed, or who the person referred to by the pronoun "me?" The Chaldee paraphrast supposes the prophet himself to be the person; nor ought this to occasion much surprise, for as Dr. Eveleigh* has observed, an expression indicating the Lord of hosts to have been sent by the Lord of hosts, though perfectly intelligible and easy to a christian, "might well stagger the faith of those, who had no opportunity of being instructed by the additional information given in the new testament on the subject." The wonder is that the commentator Lowth, whose remarks on Isaiah, xlviii 16, have been cited before, and who therein refers to this text, should not only consent to the paraphrast, but even extend† his

* Sermon on the plurality of persons in the Godhead, p. 2.

† I have said that Lowth *extends* the interpretation; for it does not appear, that the paraphrast considered Zechariah to be the person referred to by the pronouns of the

interpretation to the preceding words. It seems impossible to account for this inconsistency, except on the supposition, that in order to preserve the grammatical construction, he saw the necessity of referring the former clauses of the proclamation to the same speaker as the last clause: and since he followed the Chaldee paraphrast in ascribing this to the prophet, he found himself obliged to attribute those also to the same.

If the learned commentator had been pressed with the inconsistency, he might perhaps have vindicated himself by a reference to Isaiah, vi. 10, and Jeremiah, i. 10, where the prophets are described as doing, or as bidden to do, that, which they predict shall be done. Those passages however are far from being parallel with the subject of his comment, as might easily be

first person in the *former* part of the message. Although by inserting in his paraphrase of the *last* clause the word, *לְאֵלֹהִים*, he certainly meant to put that into the mouth of the prophet, yet in his interpretation of the former part he has made the speaker use such terms, as no man would think of ascribing to a prophet, or to any being inferior to the Almighty himself. "Behold," he says, "I lift up *[אֶת־כֹּחִי]* the stroke of my power over them." The speaker is here made expressly to assert that the power, by which he acts, is his own, which in any case of a delegated agent would certainly be an audacious infringement on the respect due to his principal, "glorying of his gift, as if he had not received it." But in this case, where the agent is supposed to be an inspired prophet, and the principal, no other than God himself, it amounts to such an excess of impiety, as no man can be supposed guilty of imagining.

proved, were there any occasion. But it really appears quite superfluous to dwell longer upon the subject; since few indeed will be found willing to admit a construction, so strangely entangled and confused, as that, which, without the least notice or mark of such a change, takes away a pronoun of the first person both from the speaker, whose words are rehearsed and from him who rehearses them, and assigns it to the writer, who is nowise introduced in the passage, and whose only business is to record what was uttered in his hearing.

Dr. Blaney, like Mr. Lowth, though he followed an opposite course*, felt the necessity of attributing the last clause of the proclamation to the same speaker, as that immediately preceding; and therefore has referred the pronoun "me" to the angel. It is however difficult to conceive, that the angel should send such a message to the people of God. Zechariah has not recorded either his name or his office, nor does it any where appear, that he was in any degree known, or ever became known to them. Yet not only is the phrase such, as is ill adapted to

* I say he followed an opposite course, because he proceeded from the first clause to the last, whereas the commentator went in the retrograde order from the last to the first.

be used by one unknown and always to remain so, but the whole frame and purport of the passage so directly tend to connect the speaker immediately and personally with his prediction, as the deliverer and avenger of the chosen people, that he could hardly have failed of being recognised, as a person made known by previous description to them, if ever his promise were justified by the performance.

The phrase, "and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you," is found in no other part of scripture; but in the narrative of Zechariah's vision it occurs no less than four times in the space of little more than fifty verses, and is always used, as will hereafter appear, by the same speaker. Hence we may with great probability collect, that it is used by that speaker with peculiar appropriation to himself. The sense also, in which it is so appropriated, may be discovered by comparing it with another phrase, which is nearly akin to it, and which with some unimportant varieties of expression, is very common in scripture; "and ye shall know that I am the Lord." This form of words is generally found to conclude, though sometimes it introduces a prediction, promise, or threatening; and is always used to express the solemn appeal, which God makes to the accomplishment

thereof, as the proper evidence that he who spake it, and who in speaking it made himself known by his name Jehovah, is the omnipotent and supreme governor of the world. In like manner herethe speaker sent by the Lord of hosts solemnly appeals to the accomplishment of his prediction, as the sufficient proof, that he who speaks it, and who describes himself as a divine saviour and king, is the person sent by Jehovah to visit and redeem his people. As by that Jehovah vindicates his claim to be the one true God, so by this the person sent by Jehovah vindicates his right and title to be considered eminently and in a sense far above all competition and comparison, the SHILOH*, the Apostle, the Sent of God.

* Dr. Hales in vol. 2, p. 168, of his Analysis of ancient chronology, renders Shiloh, the apostle, in reference to Heb. iii. 1, therein following the vulgate, which renders the word, "qui mittendus est," as if the translator had read π instead of κ . Neither this nor the more common interpretation of the word, by deriving it from שלח, tranquillus fuit, is acknowledged by the Chaldee paraphrase, or by the Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions: all of which plainly consider it, as compounded of two pronouns with Lamed. The LXX in particular seem to have had Ezekiel, xxi. 27, before their eyes. The whole evidence on the subject is stated in Durell's parallel prophecies of Jacob and Moses, p. 61 and following. The general result of a collation of which is, that Shiloh is a significant proper name, denoting an owner, one to whom something belongs, or for whom it is reserved, whenever he shall come, or be sent, to take possession of his right. Thus it is found to amount nearly to the same thing, as if the word were written שלח. The two names of Messiah and Shiloh are united in Isaiah, lxi. 1.

The prophets never manifest the least disposition to magnify themselves. "What are we," said Moses, "that ye murmur against us; what is Aaron that ye murmur against him?" The only strong instance we can find to the contrary, is to be seen in Balaam, who certainly speaks of his prophetic character in very high terms. But the most magnificent description, which he gives of himself, is prodigiously inferior to that before us, in which the speaker, asserting the reality and importance of his mission, makes use of a phrase parallel to that, by which the Almighty himself is pleased to vindicate his eternal power and godhead. Some slight traces however may be found of a similar phrase in the writings of Moses with respect to his mission, as in Numbers, xvi. 29; and yet feebler symptoms of the same may be discerned in 1 Kings, xviii. 36, and Luke, i. 19. But perhaps the nearest approach is to be found in Ezekiel, ii. 5, and xxxiii. 33; "they shall know that there hath been a prophet among them." Yet these words are not only greatly inferior in strength and sharpness of emphasis to what the speaker in the passage before us says of himself, but they are differently circumstanced. They are not the words of the prophet himself magnifying his office, but of God speaking to the prophet and

asserting his own divine veracity in the message delivered at his command by Ezekiel to his people.

It should also be remarked that the parallel phrase, "and ye shall know that I am the Lord," in Isaiah, xlix. 23, is used by a person, who presently after styles himself "the Saviour and Redeemer of Zion, the mighty one of Jacob." But the subject of prediction there, according to the interpretation of the learned Campegius Vitringa*, who justly asserts that no other can be given of the passage, is the overthrow of the heathen power of Rome and the establishment of christianity by Constantine the great, which is the very interpretation, that has been given above of the second proclamation in this part of Zechariah's vision.

Now considering, that this phrase is peculiar to the vision of Zechariah, that no other equivalent thereto is applied to prophet or angel in any other part of scripture, while a parallel one is appropriated by the Almighty to himself for a purpose similar to what this is used for here; considering that the grammatical construction of the passage, when no violence is offered to it, makes Jehovah himself the speaker of the words, that the several parts of the proclamation cannot

* Comment. in Jesaiam vol. 2. p. 597.

be made consistent with one another by any forced construction, that the doctrine, to be collected from the passage plainly construed, is no other, than the fundamental point set forth in the new testament, that the "Father sent the Son," and that the parallel phrase is in another text applied to Jehovah, expressly as the saviour and redeemer of his people, where the same future events are the subjects of discourse, the conclusion is both safe and certain, that the speaker, whose words are rehearsed by the angel, and who both at the beginning and end thereof describes himself as sent by Jehovah, is no other than the second person in the trinity, predicting some particulars of his mission into the world, to redeem, restore, and save it.

Dr. Blaney, after rejecting* the authority of the ancient christian fathers, as incompetent judges in a question of Hebrew criticism, and passing over without notice that of the ancient versions and of modern commentators, appeals† to "the conviction of every sensible and unbiassed reader" in favour of his explanation. I am not afraid to appeal to the same authority, without however rejecting or neglecting those, which Dr. Blaney has set aside or passed over, against the explanation he has given. For according to

* Appendix to Zechariah; p. 79. † Idem p. 81.

that, the state of the case is as follows : An angel appears proclaiming deliverance to Zion and earnestly exhorting her to flee from Babylon : in confirmation of his admonition he brings a message from God, which he professes to deliver in God's own words ; but no sooner has he introduced the message in the usual form, than he breaks off into a parenthesis, and speaks of himself and of the purpose, for which he is sent, for two lines together : then indeed he gives us the divine oracle, which we are surprised to find comprised in one line, consisting of no more than six words, enunciating a mere general proposition, and by far the least important part of the whole passage : after this he returns to speak of himself, as the deliverer of God's chosen people, magnifying himself in most extraordinary language through the three remaining lines of the proclamation. Really it is hardly to be supposed, that a sensible and unbiassed reader will prefer an explanation of this passage founded on such a division of its parts, as Dr. Blaney has proposed, to one, which follows the division sanctioned by ancient versions and ancient fathers, by our English translation, and by almost all modern commentators.

We now proceed to the third proclamation.
10. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion ; for

- “lo, I come, and will dwell in the midst of thee,” saith Jehovah. “And many nations shall be joined unto Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee; and thou shalt know, that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto thee.”
12. So Jehovah shall inherit Judah, his portion in the holy land, and shall yet again choose Jerusalem. Be silent, O all flesh, before Jehovah; for he is roused up from his holy habitation.

This proclamation consists of three parts. The first contains an animated exhortation to rejoice, the occasion of which is expressed in two annunciations made in the name of Jehovah; the second, a confirmation of God's favour to Judah, collected from the foregoing part. The third is a summons to all mankind.

Assured of being at length delivered from the power of all her enemies, the faithful citizens of Jerusalem are encouraged to raise the song of triumph. The angel exhorts them in much the same animated language, as we often find in the prophet Isaiah, to sing and rejoice at the approach of the Lord, whose presence will be followed by such blessed consequences. “For, lo! I come,” or am coming, in perfect conformity with the declaration in Psalm, xl. 7, “lo! I come.” In

Hebrews, x. 7, the apostle has fixed the application of the latter text to the Messiah; and the marked and intentional similarity (I cannot quite say identity, because there is a little difference in the Hebrew, which is not perceived in our English version) of the expressions in the two texts, carries the former also to the same subject. But no doubt on this point can be entertained by any man, who has read and considered the prophetic exhortation in the ninth chapter of our prophet, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee," and has compared it with the accomplishment of the prediction contained therein, as stated by St. Matthew and St. John. It was doubtless from these three passages chiefly, and from a comparison of them with Genesis, xlix. 10, Isaiah, xxxv. 4, and lxii. 11, and other texts, where the coming of a king or saviour is announced, that the Christ at the time of his appearance was commonly known and described, as ο ΕΡΧΟΜΕΝΟΣ, He that cometh, or should come. This simple description is emphatically given him as a name or title in Matthew xi. 3, and Luke, vii. 19, 20, beside other texts, in which it is joined with other words. There cannot then remain any reasonable question, as to the person, who here announces

his intended coming. He is certainly no other than the Son of God, and to him we have the angel's authority for ascribing the name of Jehovah.

Since our Lord sustains various characters, he may be said to come in any one of them. Thus we are told, that "he came to seek and to save that which was lost," that "he came to save his people Israel," that "he came to save the world," to be a king, to be an high-priest; and that he will yet come to be the judge of quick and dead. In all these respects Christ is he that cometh, and as such he may be truly considered as foretelling his coming in this prediction.

But he especially declares, that when he cometh, he will dwell in the midst of his city and people. Doubtless this was in some measure fulfilled, when he sojourned in Jerusalem in the days of his flesh. Yet this would be but a narrow, scanty, and inchoate accomplishment. The Lord plainly means to speak, not of a short and temporary residence, as that which Christ occasionally made at Jerusalem, but of a fixed and permanent abode. In this sense the prediction is fulfilled only by Christ's abode in his church, by his spirit. Before he quitted the world he promised his disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you;" and the

promise was performed, when the Holy Ghost descended upon them. By him Christ continues still to dwell in his church and in every faithful member thereof, in proof of which it would be easy to cite numerous passages from the new testament. Now he, who so loveth the church, as to dwell continually in it, will certainly protect it with all his power, according to that solemn promise of his*, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," and according to that sublime, but awful view, which he affords us of himself, as "head over all things to it," in the opening of St. John's Revelation and in the seven epistles, which he directs to seven of its principal component members, and in them to the whole body. The dwelling then of Jehovah in the spiritual Jerusalem, as well as his coming, is the subject of of singing and triumph

* Bishop Horsley, in his sermons, vol. 1, p. 326, explains this promise, of the final triumph of the church over the power of the grave, when the gates of Hades shall have no power to confine the departed saints. But I consider Hades to be here put for the invisible abode of damned spirits; and since in times of old, the gates of cities were the places, where courts of justice and councils were held, I believe the gates of Hades to be here used by a metonymy for those who sit there, the principalities and chief powers of darkness. In this Schleusner concurs. So Glass. *Portæ inferorum denotant consilia, machinationes ac potestatem Diaboli, et hominum ejus ministrorum; ratione similitudinis inde ducta, quod in portis olim judicia et consultationes exercebantur.* Philolog. sac. lib. 5, tract 1, cap. 12.

to all her citizens ; it is the ground of a solid and satisfying joy, that passes not away ; yea, they may even rejoice with a reverential joy in the prospect of his second coming, as they are exhorted to do in Psalm xcvi, notwithstanding the occasion of it and the terrors that will attend it ; “for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth ; he shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with his truth.”

The second occasion of joy and triumph, which the Lord announces to Zion, is the conversion of the Gentiles to the obedience of the faith. “And many nations shall be joined unto Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people.” The prediction of this event, as a subject of joy, plainly implies an appeal to the benevolent affections. The children of Zion, as the worshippers of the one true God, ought to rejoice at the happy prospect of the deliverance of mankind, from the darkness and error of their idolatrous ways, to serve the living and true God. Jealousy, at such an event, could not be apprehended ; nothing but mutual congratulation and felicity could be expected. Those too, who were destined to be joined to the Lord, would add greatly to the strength of those, who were already his people, and would be a visible means of accomplishing the promises of safety, protection, and

conquest, given them in the preceding proclamations. At the same time the people of Zion were instructed, that the divine promises did not extend to make them lords and masters over those, who were to become, not their servants, but the people of the Lord, as well as themselves; and perhaps also, that they might look for such alterations in the constitution of their ecclesiastical polity, as might adapt it to the reception of the many nations. The prediction is to the same purpose, as that in Psalm, xlvii. 9; "the voluntary ones* of the people are gathered together, the people of the God of Abraham;" plainly alluding to the promise in Genesis, xvii. 5; "a father of many nations have I made thee;" and hinting the divine intention to form one body of a church out of all nations; an intention, which is collected, as a prediction, by St. John, from the murderous proposal of the infidel Caiaphas, in xi. 51, 52, 53, of his gospel, and is magnifi-

* See the margin of our english bibles; and Bishop Horsley on the Psalms, vol. 1, p. 278. Our translators have rendered the Hebrew word in both places, the people; whereas in the former the original word is in the plural number. The distinction is not only obvious in point of grammar, but highly important in point of meaning, for as עַמִּים always signifies nations, Gentiles or heathen, so עַם, I believe is never, or if ever, very rarely, used for any, but the peculiar people of God, either under the old or new covenant. The neglect of this distinction is frequently to be lamented in our authorized translation.

cently illustrated by St. Paul, in ii, iii, iv, of his epistle to the Ephesians.

The reader can hardly fail to remark a striking change of person in this part of the prediction. Jehovah, the person speaking, declares, that "many nations shall be joined to Jehovah and shall be MY people." Similar changes however are not uncommon with the Hebrew writers; and therefore too much stress must not be laid upon this. Yet when we find the same speaker, at the conclusion of his message, appealing to the event, as the proper evidence of his having been sent by Jehovah of hosts, it seems not too much to infer from the change of person in this place, an intention in the speaker, to indicate thereby, that the Gentiles who should join themselves to God the Father, would be received and acknowledged as his own people by God the Son*. At least it is certain from the use of the possessive pronoun of the first person, that the angel cannot be the speaker here, but that the words of Jehovah are continued from the foregoing verse.

* The note of Burkius is worth transcribing. Solus Filius Dei eos habet pro populo suo, qui adhærent ad Jehovah patrem. Conf. Joh. 16, 15, init. Sunt autem duo correlata, per orationem semiduplicem mutuo respicientia. Gentes multæ, inquit Filius Dei, adhærebunt ad Jehovah Patrem et me, et erunt in populum mihi Patrique. Ipsæ ad Patrem et me se applicabunt: Ego et Pater eas, tanquam populum gratiæ, elementis admitemus et in sinum recipimus. Gnomon, p. 487.

"In that day," is the same thing as to say, during that time; meaning the time of Christ's coming and dwelling by his spirit with his people. The expression is often used in the new testament of an extended period*, during which Christ is in some measure exerting and manifesting his divine power and glory, but what the particular period may be, can be learned only from the context. During all this period the many nations shall be joining themselves, and shall continue joined, unto Jehovah, who repeats his gracious promise; "and I will dwell in the midst of thee," that is to say, in the midst of Zion, now inseparably joined into one body with the nations, who cleave unto Jehovah. But although the prediction thus accompanies the Christian church, compounded of Jew and Gentile, through its whole duration, yet it has a more special regard to the latter part of it, when the partial blindness, that hath happened unto Israel, shall be removed, and they shall return unto the Lord their God and to David their King, and when as many of the nations, as the Lord our God shall finally call, shall join themselves unto him. So it is observed by the commentator Lowth, "this promise relates chiefly to the latter times."

* Schleusneri Lexicon. Tom. 1. p. 981.

The Lord concludes his oracle by a repetition of that solemn appeal to the event in proof of his being the true messenger of God the Father; "and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto thee." This form of words is plainly intended to conclude the passage, to which it is annexed. But then the messenger of Jehovah and speaker of the words will be so clearly proved to be Jehovah himself, that Dr. Blaney's hypothesis founded on Hebrews, i. 1, 2, must fall to the ground. He has therefore endeavoured to cut off these words from the context, by three different means. First he renders the connective particle* "then," instead of "and," contrary to his own practice in the three other instances in which the phrase occurs. But since

* In his appendix to Zechariah, p. 81. Dr. Blaney contends for his right to assign to the particle, the signification of "*then*," as "being allowed it in other places, and as being a liberty which absolutely and in itself, no sound Hebrew critic will be inclined to disallow." Certainly not. But that liberty must not be used capriciously, but must be regulated by right reason; and the signification of the particle, or rather the mode, in which it connects the following with the preceding words, must be determined by the exigency of the passage. Vide Gussetii Comment. Ling. Heb. p. 406, or the citation therefrom, which Tympius has brought forward with approbation in his note on Noldius de particulis, p. 283. Now Dr. Blaney, by rendering the particle, by the English conjunction "and" in other places, where the connection is altogether similar to that before us, has precluded himself from the right of rendering it here by "*then*;" for I apprehend that the support of his hypothesis cannot be reckoned the same thing, as the exigency of the passage.

that does not extend to break off the connection, but only to impair its closeness, it would by no means suffice to assign over the words to the proclaiming angel, instead of Jehovah; he has therefore in the second place had recourse to an altered punctuation, placing a full stop, equivalent to the ending of a verse, where our translators have set a comma, and where the Masorites have used a point of less distinction than our colon; and in the third place, having resorted to the modern contrivance of inverted commas, to mark the preceding words as the speech of Jehovah, he breaks them off here; by which method the eye of the reader is caught, and his attention following his eye is turned aside from the arbitrary and confused application of the personal pronoun. The means when discerned defeat the end.

To conclude this long, and perhaps somewhat tedious discussion. There is a passage in the book of Exodus, xxix. 45, 46, which completely vindicates the authorized translation and the commonly received interpretation against Dr. Blaney's. "And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, that brought them" &c. In this text we find the parallel form of words, "ye shall know" &c.

connected with preceding words closely parallel to those in the passage before us, and in a mode also of connection equally parallel, affording altogether such an instance of triple parallelism, as is rarely to be found; and such as to prove, that the words in question have been rightly rendered by our translators, and are referable only to the person, who is the speaker in the foregoing sentence.

The words, that follow, make no part of the Lord's message, but are pronounced by the angel of the proclamation, as a part thereof and as an inference drawn from the divine oracle. The particle, "and," therefore couples them with the reason assigned by the angel for his exhortation to sing and rejoice, for which they afford an additional argument. But since they also contain an inference drawn from the message, the Hebrew particle may be rendered by some English particle slightly illative, or "and" may be understood in that sense; "so will the Lord inherit Judah his portion in the holy land and will yet again choose Jerusalem." For God having such great blessings in store for his chosen people, and having published his gracious intentions by proclamations openly delivered by an angel in his own presence and in the hearing of the prophet, could no longer be considered, as

retaining any portion of displeasure against them. On the contrary, the positive declarations of God's gracious intentions toward them in time to come, amount to plain and direct assertions, that he will in the mean time preserve and maintain them, in order to be such distinguished objects of his future mercy. Thus understood, the words are plainly calculated to effect the primary and immediate intention of Zechariah's vision; viz, to reanimate and encourage the Jews in rebuilding the temple and returning to Jerusalem. And thus too they may be justly considered, as a repetition and ratification of the words of comfort in the first part of the vision, that "Jehovah will yet again comfort Zion and will yet again choose Jerusalem."

The last verse of the proclamation is a summons to all mankind. "Be silent," or rather, "hush," for the Hebrew monosyllable is as nearly allied to the English in sound, as in sense; "Hush, O all flesh before Jehovah, for he is roused up from the habitation of his holiness," or from his holy habitation. All the kindreds of the earth, as being deeply and equally concerned, are here called and bidden to attend in reverent expectation to the things about to be declared in the following parts of the vision. God is roused up; as if he had before been in an inactive state, as

he is represented in Isaiah, xviii, 4, taking his rest, considering his dwelling place; but at the appointed season rousing himself to action*. This is quite agreeable to the words of St. Peter, in Acts, xiv, 16, that "God in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways," and to St. Paul's declaration, in Acts, xvii. 30, that "the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." The Most High is preparing himself

* "This fourth verse," says Bishop Horsley, "represents a long cessation of visible interpositions of providence, under the image of God's sitting still; the stillness of that awful pause, under the image of that torpid state of the atmosphere, in hot weather, when not a gleam of sunshine breaks for a moment through the sullen gloom; not a breath stirs; not a leaf wags; not a blade of grass is shaken; no rippling wave curls upon the sleeping surface of the waters; the black ponderous cloud, covering the whole sky, seems to hang fixed and motionless as an arch of stone; nature seems benumbed in all her operations. The vigilance nevertheless of God's silent providence is represented under the image of his keeping eye, while he thus sits still, upon his prepared habitation. The sudden eruption of judgement, threatened in the next verse, after this total cessation, just before the final call to Jew and Gentile, answers to the storms of thunder and lightning, which in the suffocating heats of the latter end of summer, succeed that perfect stillness and stagnation of the atmosphere. And as the natural thunder at such seasons, is the welcome harbinger of refreshing and copious showers; so it appears, the thunder of God's judgements will usher in the long desired season of the consummation of mercy." *Critical Disquisitions on Isaiah, xviii.* p. 96. The above cited passage presents us with so fine an example of the temperate sublime, that I could not resist the temptation to introduce it at length.

to act, by special and amazing interpositions, on men and on human affairs. Therefore let all the families of the earth, to whom these tidings shall come, bow down in submissive silence to receive the law of wisdom, goodness, and authority infinite.

NOTE FROM PAGE 89.

Archbishop Newcome renders the words, "after the obtaining of glory he hath sent me;" for the purpose, as he explains, "of acquiring glory to his people, in restraining and humbling their enemies." Dr. Blaney renders the same words, "sending me after the glory;" and has given such a translation of the whole passage as to make the person, who describes himself as sent, and as shaking his hand over the nations, to be not the Lord of hosts, but the angel who delivers the message, which is thereby reduced to only six words. In order to effect this, he has altered the vowel points of the verb שָׁלַח, so as to make it a participle suspending the sense, and has rendered כִּי as an affirmative particle, "surely," instead of the causal one, "for." These alterations cannot claim reception, as if they were the happy means of reconciling some inconsistency, of removing some difficulty in the grammar, or clearing up some obscurity in the sense. They have no such effect or tendency. But as they go to support an hypothesis, which, if admitted, would invalidate the strongest arguments hitherto derivable from the old testament, in proof of a doctrine, on which the redemption of mankind, whether revealed in the old, or in the new testament, is founded, so they must commend themselves to those chiefly, who deny that doctrine and slight that redemption, and who consequently receive them with views and feelings, to which the learned author of them was an entire stranger. Dr. Blaney himself can say no more in favour of his rendering, than that the words may be so rendered, and that he prefers so to render them; (appendix to Zechariah, p. 80 and 81;) and accordingly he manifests

how little confidence he reposed in it, by his endeavour to represent the received translation, as in point of meaning little, if at all, different from his own. "After the glory hath he sent me, *or*, as it may be rendered, sending me after the glory," plainly intending by the particle "*or*," to distribute the expressions, as different in form only, and to connect them, as alike in sense. Yet the learned professor could hardly have failed to see, that in the former case the personal pronoun, "*me*," cannot be referred to the angel, who delivers the proclamation, without offering some violence, (the degree of which will be differently estimated by different persons,) to the grammatical construction of the words; whereas in the latter it cannot be referred to any, but the angel. Is there any breach of charity in supposing, that, because he saw this, he admitted into the text of his translation a rendering, whose highest recommendation is, to those, who do not hold his hypothesis, that it is possible?

But the very possibility may be called in question, until a passage shall be produced, in which a participle is found suspending the sense in the same circumstances, as it is made to do in Dr. Blaney's translation. I am indeed aware, that there are texts, in which a participle is introduced after the formulary *כִּי אַחֲרַי*, but I have not lighted on any one, which is strictly parallel.

The phrase, "*to send after*," in the sense given it by Dr. Blaney, seems equally to stand in need of support from parallel passages. He observes, that "*to send a person after a thing implies the requisition of his service for that particular purpose*;" for the purpose, I suppose, of getting that thing; and he commends the latin translator of the Syriac version in the London Polyglott, for rendering "*ad prosequendum honorem*." The English phrase itself is, I suspect, rather too colloquial; but admitting its purity, it may still be doubted, whether in Hebrew the object of a mission is ever coupled with the verb *שָׁלַח* by the preposition *אַחֲרַי*. Unless too it should be found, that the phrase, wherever it occurs, is always used in that sense, *אַחֲרַי* might still retain in this place its usual sense of "*after*," in point of time. The LXX, the vulgate, and the Chaldee paraphrast have so rendered it, and in regard to the Syriac, Dr. Blaney was unable to extend his commendation from the latin translator to the version itself, which has literally, "*after the glory*."

Another strong argument against Dr. Blaney's translation is to be collected from the scope and sense of the passage. The words of the Lord are introduced by the angel, as the ground and reason of his exhortation to the Jews to remove from Babylon and its neighbourhood, and as a strong inducement to them so to do. But the six words, so penuriously allotted to the Almighty out of the angel's speech, contain no special reason, nor offer any special inducement to it. "Surely he that touched you hath touched the apple of his own eye." The sentence expresses indeed a severe menace to the enemies and oppressors of the Jews, and so far a general encouragement to themselves, but no particular inducement to remove from Babylon. Dr. Blaney has indeed endeavoured to circumscribe the general proposition contained in the words and to point them to Babylon, as their particular object, by rendering the first participle *ym* in the past instead of the present time, and by altering the latter into a verb in the perfect tense; but even thus, the sense, in which the words may apply to the exhortation to flee from Babylon, is left so vague and indeterminate, as to give the sentence little effect beyond a general proposition. The words, which really contain the argument for the Jews to quit Babylon, are part of those, which Dr. Blaney has attributed to the angel speaking in his own person; that he would be sent against the nations, who, at the time of his being sent, would be the spoilers and oppressors of the Jews; and that he would make them a spoil unto their servants, that is to say, to the Jews, for those, whom they treated as servants, are the persons, whom they spoiled. This is necessary to be observed, in order to make the opposition full and the threatened retribution perfect. Now since the Babylonians, at the period of Zechariah's vision, had fallen from their rank, as an imperial people, a rank which they never regained, they cannot be the persons intended in this description, for the participle, *ym*, if we give it a perfect signification, does not express the perfect past, those that have spoiled and have now ceased to spoil, but the perfect present, those that have spoiled and yet continue to spoil. Indeed the exhortation to remove from Babylonia, when taken together with this assurance, amounts in effect to an explicit declaration, that that was not the country, nor its inhabitants the people, intended in the exactness of God's retributive justice, to be made the spoil of the Jews. Otherwise doubtless they would have

been exhorted to remain there, that so they might be instruments in bringing to pass his purpose and be ready at hand to seize upon the promised spoil.

Farther, the words, which Dr. Blaney puts into the angel's mouth are truly sublime, expressive of the highest authority and of power almighty. They are entirely worthy of the supreme ruler himself, and utterly unfit to be applied to, or assumed by, any created being. The reasonable and powerful objection hence raised by Dr. Eveleigh is by no means obviated by the two passages, which Dr. Blaney has produced in his appendix, 2 Kings, xix, 35, and 2 Samuel, xxiv. 16. In the former of the two it is merely stated, that "the angel of the Lord went out and smote;" in the latter it is said that "the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it," but was bidden by his divine sovereign to desist. In both these texts an angel is represented, as the minister of the divine anger, sent to destroy people by a pestilence. But without dwelling on the consideration, that this is not specifically the case before us, it is to be observed, that in the former no one expression is used in the least similar to those attributed by Dr. Blaney to the angel in Zechariah; and consequently that may be dismissed without farther notice. In the latter indeed the angel is said to stretch out his hand, וַיִּשְׁטַח; but the form of the expression in the original Hebrew is far from being parallel with that, which in the instance before us Dr. Blaney supposes to be applied by the angel to himself. He does not even state our english version correctly (I am however far from thinking the incorrectness to be intentional) when he describes the angel, as stretching out his hand "over" Jerusalem; for our translation has not "over," but "upon." In the Hebrew no preposition is expressed; and I am bold to say, that that, which is to be understood, is not עַל, over, but אֶל or the prefix Lamed, to or towards. See Buxtorf's Thes. Heb. p. 574. The preposition עַל is found joined with וַיִּשְׁטַח in only three places, in two of which, 1 Kings, xii, 4, and Job, 31, 21, our translators have rendered it "against," and in the third, "to," 1 Chronicles, 13, 10; the propriety of which renderings none can doubt. Therefore if עַל could be understood in 2 Samuel, xxiv. 16, it must be in the sense not of "over," but of "to or against." In other places where the phrase וַיִּשְׁטַח occurs, it is construed with אֶל or the prefix Lamed, for "to or towards," with Beth for "against," and with Vau, when it is joined to another verb

and signifies the preparing for or setting about the action denoted by the second verb. In two places only Exodus, iii. 20, and ix. 15, is the phrase used by the almighty himself of his own acts: and in both those it is not followed by a preposition, but connected with the following verb by Vau. In other places, where God is said to "stretch forth his hand," and they are very numerous, the verb generally, perhaps always, used, is נָטָה; and that almost always followed by עַל. But the act of "shaking the hand over," is expressed by the verb נָתַח, with עַל; and the phrase is found in only two texts beside the present, Isaiah, xi. 15, xix. 16, where it is applied to acts of the Almighty himself, as Dr. Eyleigh has remarked in his sermon, p. 9.

Other verbs are to be found, as שָׁרַח, שָׁרַח, governing the noun יָד and connected with other nouns in different ways, and with meanings more or less similar to the above. Upon these however it is unnecessary to dwell; but of the three before mentioned שָׁרַח, נָטָה, נָתַח, it is to be remarked, that when combined with יָד, they express the beginning or undertaking of actions by agents having, or conceiving themselves to have, powers adequate to the performance of them; and their signification is of course materially affected by the nature of the agent, of the act, and of the subject acted upon. The first of these, with whatever prepositions combined, is ascribed indifferently to God and to inferior beings; the second joined with עַל to God, and to those only, who act with his power and by his direction, as to Moses and Aaron, in Exodus, vii. 19. viii. 1, 2; while the third, with the same preposition, is limited to God alone. So strictly is this last form of expression appropriated to the supreme being, that the sacred penman, in 2 Kings, v. 11, seems purposely to have avoided it, when he had much occasion to use it. In that text, the indignant Naaman expresses his previous expectation, that Elisha would have called upon God and have accompanied his prayers by some sign indicative of his exercising supernatural power, by "striking or rather waving (moving up and down says the margin of our english version) his hand over the place." Now the inspired historian properly might, and probably would, have used here the preposition עַל, and accordingly our translators have so rendered, as if that were the word; but in order, as it seems to me, to avoid infringing upon a religious usage, which consecrated that phrase to express the immediate acts of God alone, he has adopted the less

expressive preposition *by*. Our english translators also have manifested the accuracy of their observation, by generally rendering the first of the three verbs, "to put forth, or put out," except in four instances, in two of which it is applied, as before mentioned, to works of the Almighty, and in the two others to acts of the highest solemnity and importance; the second, "to stretch forth," and the third, "to shake." It is now I trust fully proved, that the support, which Dr. Blaney endeavoured to derive from two parallel passages entirely fails him.

Besides, if it could be shewn, that the expressions are perfectly parallel, still there is such a difference in the mode of using and applying them, as must destroy the effect of that parallelism. In 2 Samuel, xxiv. 16, the historian is gravely relating the terrible act of divine vengeance, of which the angel was the minister, and he accordingly expresses it in words suitable to the greatness of the occasion and to the majesty of Him, to whom vengeance belongeth. But in Zechariah the angel himself is the speaker, and according to Dr. Blaney though he speaks of himself as sent, he does notwithstanding exult and glory in his mission in the most extraordinary and unprecedented terms. He applies to himself the most sublime and awful form of expressing the exercise of power almighty, a form, which is used only twice beside in scripture and is there appropriated to the immediate acts of the Most High. Surely no such assumption of divine authority can be tolerated in any created being, however high and important may be the end, which he is delegated to effect. If angels might magnify their ministry after this fashion, there might be some fair pretence for offering them worship as tutelary Gods.

PART IV.

CAP. III. 1—10

IN the former parts of the vision, the purpose of the Most High to bless and defend his people, to overthrow the hostile powers of the world, to enlarge the boundaries of their habitation, and to increase and multiply them by a great accession of converted Gentiles, has been represented by a number of striking symbols and positively announced by emphatic and repeated declarations. But the principle, on which the Jews were again accepted and taken into favour, and on which the Gentiles were to be received into the number of the people of God, has not been distinctly laid down or even noticed. It might have been, for any thing that has been said, the meritorious claims of the former, on account either of their own past sufferings and present piety, or of the virtues of their ancestors; and of the latter also, on account of their foreseen

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faith and obedience in turning to Jehovah, as their God, and taking upon themselves the obligations of the Mosaic law, as proselytes of righteousness. And this is probably the notion, that would have presented itself to a Jew, until better instructed on the subject. In order then to prevent, or to correct so great and fundamental a mistake, and to satisfy all reasonable doubts and expectations, it was necessary to give the Jews as full instruction on the principle of the divine procedure towards themselves and towards the Gentiles, as was consistent with the scheme of symbolical prophecy, and as the imperfection of their previous information on spiritual subjects would admit of being in that manner laid before them. Accordingly in this fourth part of the vision it is fully shewn, that the benignant declarations of God, expressed towards both in the third part, are not founded upon any actual or past merits of the Jews or of their ancestors, nor upon any foreseen merits of the Gentiles in taking upon them the law of Moses, and consequently not upon the value and efficacy of any sacrifices, offerings, or rites, however scrupulously and punctually performed: but solely upon his free grace and mercy, in putting away their sins, through the illustrious person, long since made known to them as the Messiah,

and here farther revealed, as at once their judge and saviour, high priest and king.

1. And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

Zechariah begins the fourth part of his vision with an expression similar to that, by which he introduced the four workmen in the second part; "And he shewed me;" thereby ascribing the vision to the operation of divine power and influence upon his mind. For we must either borrow from that passage the proper nominative* to the verb, which is Jehovah, or else we must take it impersonally, and then the sense will be to the same purpose, as if the prophet had expressed himself in the other form so usual with him; "and I lifted up mine eyes and saw, and behold."

* Dr. Blaney conceives the angel interpreter to be the nominative that ought to be understood to the verb; but he was not then by the side of Zechariah; he had been sent with the message delivered in the preceding part to the measurer of the holy city, and was not yet returned. Even if he could be demonstrated to be present, the probability would still be, that Jehovah is the proper nominative; for the angel was present when Jehovah shewed Zechariah the emblem of the workmen. It is unaccountable that Dr. Blaney should here maintain the presence of this angel, when in his enumeration of the dramatis personæ, in the note on verse 2, he omits all mention of him.

Before proceeding farther, it is necessary to remark, that in the narrative of his vision Zechariah appears to have been very studious of brevity; so much so indeed, as to be liable to the charge of the poet*. As at the commencement of any part or scene, he never sets out with enumerating his dramatis personæ, but introduces them abruptly, acting or speaking, without any previous notice of their presence, so neither does he inform us of any changes, that may have taken place in the appearance or circumstances of those characters, which have been before introduced, when they are again brought upon the stage. The angel of Jehovah, who acted as captain of the Lord's host in the first part of the vision, appears to have been present in the second part also, since the prophet expressly ascribes the image of the four workmen to the influence of Jehovah, as a person present†. In the third part likewise there are vestiges to be discerned of a celestial court or council, in which the angel of Jehovah, by presiding as sovereign, must have filled a station analogous, and little, if at all, superior, to that, which we have seen him occupy in the first scene. In both these instances however, since his presence itself is matter

* *Dum brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio.*

† *Commentary, p. 52.*

of argument, we are of course left to collect by the same means whatever notions we may form, as to the manner or circumstances, in which he shewed himself. Neither is any direct information on those points to be found even in the narrative of the part now before us. Although the angel of Jehovah here stands forth confessed, yet the manner and circumstances of his appearance remain to be collected wholly in the way of argument drawn from the character in which he appears. At the same time the facility and readiness, with which we are enabled to draw such an argument, seem to afford as good a reason, beside the mere study of brevity, as can be given or desired, to vindicate the silence of the prophet in this instance. For since in the first part of the vision the angel of Jehovah is formally introduced in circumstances suited to the office, which he there is seen to fill ; and since sufficient information is there afforded us as to his august character and divine nature, he is not now a stranger to us ; we know who and how great he is ; we cannot be surprised at any pitch of exaltation, to which he may be raised ; and therefore may be safely permitted to suppose him invested with such glory and accompanied by such attendants, as are truly suitable to the character and office which he sustains.

He here appears as judge, sovereign judge, in a cause between God's own high-priest and the chief of fallen angels. Joshua is expressly said to stand before him, and Satan, who resists the petition or suit of Joshua, is said to stand at the right hand of the suppliant, the usual place of an accuser or adversary, as we find in Psalm, cix. 6. Thus both Joshua and Satan were seen standing before the angel. Now standing is the proper posture of persons awaiting the sentence of a judge; and "to stand before" is the very phrase used in scripture for persons receiving judgment, or appearing as plaintiffs or defendants in a court of judicature*. Since then Joshua has a suit, in which he is opposed by Satan, and since both the parties stand before the angel of the Lord, we conclude, that he appeared to Zechariah on this occasion, as judge in that great cause which was pleaded in his presence. The Angel of Jehovah without doubt appeared sitting, the proper posture for a judge, of which we find many instances in scripture†; and the

* Taylor's Hebrew Concordance in v. עמד, section 13. See also Numbers, xxvii. 2, xxxv. 12, Deut. xix. 17. Josh. xx. 6, 9, 1 Kings, iii, 16, Daniel, vii. 10. In the new testament the same phrase is used in the same sense, ex. gr. Matthew, xxvii. 11, Romans, xiv. 10, Revelation, xx. 12. It seems however that accusers sometimes sat: 1 Kings, xxi. 13.

† Ex. gr. see Exodus xviii. 13, 2 Samuel, xix. 8, Daniel, vii. 9, 26.

imagination of the reader is left to the guidance of his own discretion, in supposing him environed with a degree of pomp and majesty, proportionate to the sublimity of the tribunal and the importance of the occasion. Of course Job, i. 6, and 1 Kings, xxii. 19 will occur to every one's mind.

The matter in controversy is not stated. But from the time, at which the vision took place, the circumstances of the Jews at that period, and from the tenor of many passages in the foregoing parts and of some that speedily follow, we may satisfactorily collect, that Joshua came petitioning to be admitted to serve his office of high-priest in the new temple, with all the advantages and blessings to the people of God, which were properly attached to the due and acceptable exercise of the pontifical and sacerdotal ministry. In this petition he is opposed by Satan, the proper adversary and accuser of God's people; and though the ground of his opposition be not specified, there can be no doubt, that it was founded on the former idolatries and other past sins of the Jews, their present lukewarmness and want of zeal, and their consequent unworthiness to have the benefit of such a high and sacred minister officiating amongst them.

Satan having been heard in opposition to Joshua's petition, the latter seems to have made no reply by way of defence to the charges brought against him; at least none is found on record. Indeed it rather appears from what follows, that the high priest pleaded guilty and threw himself on the mercy of the great judge. Whereupon nothing remained but to pass sentence.

2. And Jehovah said unto Satan, Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan; even Jehovah, that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

It has been proved above, that the angel of Jehovah appeared to Zechariah, acting as judge in the important cause, which was pleaded before him. Now in every court of justice it is the part of the judge to pronounce sentence, but the sentence is here expressly declared to be pronounced by Jehovah; therefrom Jehovah is the judge. But it has been proved, that the angel of Jehovah is the judge, consequently Jehovah and the angel of Jehovah are one and the same person; the second person in the blessed trinity, to whom "all judgement is committed*," exercising by anticipation his proper office of supreme universal judge of men and angels.

* John, v. 22.

St. Jude in his epistle, verse 9, quoting this text, informs us, that the words were addressed to Satan by Michael the Archangel. The word "Archangel," signifies either the chief angel or the prince of angels; and consequently coincides exactly with the description afforded us of the angel of Jehovah in the first part of the vision. The title itself, though not formally expressive of divinity in its owner, is so perfectly consistent with it, that we rather expect, than are surprised to find, that he, who is invested with it, is very God; and though it is not probable, that St. Jude used it in citing this text, for the mere purpose of shewing us, who the angel of Jehovah in the vision of Zechariah really is, and of informing us thereby, that he is Lord over Satan, the chief of fallen angels*; yet the citation coupled with the title has that effect.

* See p. 17 of this commentary. Some readers perhaps may think the words of St. Jude, that "Michael contended with the devil and that Michael durst not bring against him a railing accusation," inconsistent with the belief, that Michael is no other than the Son of God. But let it be remembered, that in scripture God is often said to contend, to plead with his people, as if a party in a law-suit, he being of course judge as well as party; and that in such places, ex. gr. Ezekiel xvii. 20, xx. 35, 36, the LXX use the same word, *διαρρινωμαι*, as St. Jude. The idea of daring, as if some peril attended on such a step, is not that which is expressed by the verb *ετολμησε*. It properly signifies to bear, support, endure; (see Wetstein's note on Romans, v. 7, and Parkhurst's Greek Lexicon in v. *τολμων*;) and when that has reference, not to other persons or external

It is very remarkable, that sentence is pronounced, not on the accused, by rejecting his petition, although he either makes no defence, or pleads guilty, but upon the malevolent adversary and accuser; "Jehovah rebuke thee." The words being uttered by the second person in the Holy Trinity, and the verb being in the third person, the Almighty Father is meant by the name Jehovah, which is the nominative case to it. He is invoked to rebuke Satan. The word "rebuke" in the original language properly signifies to check, curb, or restrain; and when

circumstances, but to what passes within a man's own mind, it is the same thing, as to be inclined, to resolve, to think proper. Accordingly, in this text of St. Jude, the meaning is, that Michael could not endure, was not inclined, did not think proper; not out of any respect for Satan, much less from any fear of him, but out of a due regard to his own character and dignity, to bring against him a railing accusation, or rather to pass upon him a judgement expressed in opprobrious terms. *Non quod timuerit diabolum, sed quod ex decore omnia agere voluerit.* Witssii Com. in Jud. cited by Lardner, in vol. 6, p. 621, of his works. That learned critic has not scrupled to express his conviction, that St. Jude refers in the text above cited to the vision of Zechariah, which may console us for the contrary opinion of Michaelis. Introduction to the new testament, cap. 29, sec. 4. I venture however to differ from Lardner in attributing to Bp. Sherlock's Dissertation on the second Epistle of St. Peter, a much higher praise than that of mere ingenuity. To me that prelate's hypothesis seems to supply the only probable means of accounting for the very unusual style of the apostle in cap. 2, for the near likeness which it bears to the Epistle of St. Jude, and at the same time for the strong lines of difference, which are discernible between the two.

proceeding from God, is a word of very serious and awful import. It is applied not merely to verbal reproof or to slight animadversions of justice, but to the severest inflictions of divine vengeance and the most terrific acts of divine power*. To rebuke Satan then is to curb and restrain him in the free use of that dominion, which he holds and exercises among fallen men by sufferance, to put an end to his perverse opposition to God's people, and confine him within the barriers of his infernal prison-house. We are certainly justified in putting the severest construction on the sentence; for it is here repeated with emphasis, in order to mark, according to the Hebrew manner, the certainty, the depth and extreme bitterness, of the rebuke. *Jehovah rebuke thee; even or yea, Jehovah rebuke thee†.*

* See Deut. xxviii. 20, Psalms, ix. 5, xviii. 5, Isaiah, vii. 13, li. 10, Nahum, i. 4, Malachi, ii. 3, 6, iii. 11, where the word *נָפַח* is used.

† Dr. Blaney, in his translation, has rendered *וְ* as a particle of similitude, and *נָפַח* in the past tense. In justification of the former he has appealed to Noldius de particulis, § 62. Such references, I must observe, unless they afford examples in point, are to very little purpose. Noldius has ascribed no less than seventy three significations to the particle *Vau*; that is to say, he has enumerated so many probable, or possible, modes of rendering it in different connections. Great care is therefore required in the use of his learned and laborious work, lest we apply it injudiciously and indiscriminately; so that unless both his citations support his renderings, which they sometimes are far from

It was a strong rebuke, which he received on the reestablishment of Judah and Jerusalem, in opposition to his kingdom of darkness and idolatry, and in preparation for the advent of Messiah. A still more formidable one was that, which he received, when he had the audacity to tempt our Lord, who saw him under his victorious hand, fall from his usurped dominion, like lightning

doing, and the passage in question be found to coincide with them, a reference to his concordance will only afford countenance to error. Now whoever will take the pains to consult the texts cited by Noldius at § 62, and the annotations of Tympius, Nos. 1214 and 1215, will find, that when Vau is used as a particle of similitude, or will admit of that rendering, it is in cases very differently circumstanced from that before us. In the Proverbs of Solomon this use of it is frequent, but in no instance similar to this. But if this rendering of the particle could be justified by the clearest instances, that of the verb, to which it is prefixed, cannot; for *vr* is in the future tense, and the Vau is not conversive, but merely copulative, for the verb which precedes is also in the future tense. To render it therefore in the past is contrary to the rules of Hebrew grammar. Ex gr. see Schröderi's Hebrew grammar, rule 49, and Granville Sharp's second rule in his letter to a friend, &c. No one of the ancient versions has rendered it in the past tense; and the point being Sheva, not Pathach, gives the whole weight of Jewish authority in favour of Vau Chibbur, against Vau Hippuch. The repetition of the rebuke is plainly intended to aggravate its force, whence the copulative seems to have an intensive power, which our translators have correctly expressed by "even," in conformity with their usual practice in such instances. In Latin it would be rendered by "*inquam*," of which numerous instances quite parallel to this may be seen in Noldius, § 30. Tympius in his note, 1206, observes that *v* is properly so rendered, when any thing before said is repeated; for the sake of emphasis, of perspicuity, or of explanation.

from heaven*. Another stern rebuke he received at the reformation, when "the accuser of the brethren was cast down†." Two more yet await him; the one when he shall be bound for a thousand years, the other final and eternal, when he shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone‡.

The opposition of Satan to Joshua, is not made to him personally, but officially, so as to apply to any high-priest whatever, it being founded, as has been before slightly noticed, not on Joshua's own incapacity or sinfulness, but on the unworthiness of the Jewish people. If it were not so, the ground of the opposition would not be fairly and fully met by the ground of the rebuke; for that is clearly determined to be, not the election of Joshua to the high-priesthood, but the election of Jerusalem to be God's peculiar possession upon earth; "Jehovah hath chosen," not Joshua, but "Jerusalem;" not the man to exercise the office, but the people, for whose benefit the office is instituted. Satan, it is intimated, well knew the purpose of God, to make Jerusalem the seat of his true and holy worship; and he knew that in opposing the restitution of the pontifical office to Joshua, the law-

* Luke, x. 18.

† Revelation, xii. 10.

‡ Revelation, xx. 2, 10.

ful claimant, he was opposing the accomplishment of the divine purpose, since that was necessary to the reestablishment of the temple itself in its proper use, the celebration of divine worship therein with significant rites, with dignity and splendour.

Accordingly St. Jude, in the passage before cited, informs us, that the dispute on this occasion was "concerning the body of Moses," that is, not, as has been supposed by some, the dead body of Moses, about which the Rabbinical writers have many absurd and superstitious stories, by referring to which, the meaning of the apostle has been perplexed and lost, but the spiritual body of Moses, the Jewish church, which St. Jude calls the body of Moses, by the same sort of figure, as the christian church is termed by St. Paul, the body of Christ*.

Before proceeding farther, it is necessary to recur once more to the irksome task of stating

* This interpretation is far from being new. In the 4th century Ephrem Syrus considered Joshua clothed in filthy garments, to represent the abject and deplorable state of the Jewish people in the Babylonish Captivity. Whom, as Lardner observes, St. Jude might call the body of Moses as christians are called the body of Christ, by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xii, 20, 25, 27, et al. He also observes, that the same interpretation was proposed some while ago, and well supported in a dissertation of a learned writer, who was not acquainted with Ephrem. Lardner's works, vol. 4, p. 435, and vol. 6, p. 622. The same interpretation is adopted by Dr. Mac-knight in his commentary on the Epistle.

and combating the errors of two learned men, who have greatly mistaken, perplexed, and misrepresented the meaning of the prophet, and have thereby gone to weaken the evidence adducible from the old testament, in proof of one of the most important doctrines of the christian faith. Archbishop Newcome, in his "Translation of the Minor Prophets," instead of "Jehovah" only, at the beginning of the second verse, reads "the angel of Jehovah," inserting the words, "the angel of," between brackets. This addition is made chiefly, though not entirely, upon conjecture, for it derives a little support from the Syriac version; the author of which probably, for no other version or manuscript affords him the least countenance, relied upon his own sagacity for the insertion, having the same view therein, as the learned prelate, namely, to shew that the same person, who sat as judge pronounced sentence also; a fact, which it is to be hoped, has been made sufficiently evident without such extraneous aid. Dr. Eveleigh, in the sermon before cited, has exposed the weakness of the foundation, on which this addition is proposed, and observes, that "it cuts up by the roots the powerful argument, which christians from the beginning have drawn from hence, in proof of a plurality of persons in the Godhead." Yet a

powerful argument may still be drawn from the passage in proof of the divinity of the angel of Jehovah. For who or what could he be, who sat as judge in a plea, where the high-priest of God and the prince of fallen angels were the parties, and who pronounced sentence in the name of Jehovah? From such an office, so discharged, divinity is plainly inseparable: and He, who exercised it on this occasion, can be no other than the Son of God.

Dr. Blaney declining to defend, at least passing in silence, the Archbishop's conjecture, which indeed is equally inconsistent, as the received version, with his own favourite hypothesis, in order to support the latter, has had recourse to various means, which however upon examination will be found inadequate to that end.

1. He has endeavoured to lessen the importance of the whole proceeding, by rendering in his text, "the adversary," instead of Satan, and explaining it in his note to signify, "the adversaries of the Jewish nation in a body*, or perhaps some leading person among them, as Sanballat for instance." But Sanballat and their other adversaries could hardly be represented, as the

* This was the notion of Ephrem Syrus. *Satanas adversarios judæorum representat illorum ditionem circum insidentes, ipsisque infestos.* Lardner's note, in vol. 4, p. 436, of his works.

opponents of the Jews before God, because the ground of their opposition, so far from forming a just subject of charge against that people, would rather be made a matter of commendation to them, as persons honestly zealous to preserve themselves and the law and worship of God inviolate and free from all heathen and profane mixtures. By any thing then, that they could have said, Joshua would not have been reduced to silence, but might have answered easily and triumphantly, in defence of himself and of his brethren, and in support of his petition.

Moreover the rendering of Dr. Blaney is destitute of authority. The Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic versions all plainly read Satan, as a proper name, and the LXX have perhaps still more expressively rendered it, "the devil," the peculiar and emphatic appellation of the evil spirit in the language of the new testament. Neither has the Chaldee paraphrast given us "the adversary," as the rendering of Satan; but "the sinner," or sinful one, answering to one of the names given him in the new testament by our Lord and his apostles*, "the evil one," or the wicked one. But there yet remains another

* The words used by the paraphrast are *ἁμαρτωλὸς* and *ἁμαρτωλῶς*, which signify not adversarius, but peccator, equivalent to *ὁ πονηρὸς*.

authority, which ought to set the matter at rest. The apostle Jude in his epistle, verse 9, referring to this passage, expressly declares, that it was "the devil," who was the adversary. The importance of the cause therefore stands unimpaired, as it appears in our bible version.

2. Dr. Blaney, denying Jehovah to be the same, as the angel of Jehovah, is obliged to suppose the words to have been pronounced "by a voice from heaven, or from out of the sanctuary, supposing the transaction to be represented, as passing before the temple." Either of these suppositions is entirely gratis; not the least hint of such a voice, or such a change of scene, being any where given by the prophet, nor any thing having been mentioned in the narrative, that can lead to it, as the necessary or most approved means of supplying something omitted for brevity's sake. But this was not sufficient. So long as the angel of Jehovah occupied the throne of judgement, there was danger, that he might be deemed the judge, who pronounced sentence. Therefore

3. Dr. Blaney, in his note, has degraded him from that high eminence and reduced him to the condition of "an angel in waiting as it were in the outer court." Now the prophet expressly tells us, that Joshua and of course Satan also,

"stood before the angel," but how this can be made to consist with his waiting in an outer court, I leave to the reader's consideration and decision.

4. He has rendered the word rebuke in the future tense, instead of the imperative or optative mood, "Jehovah will rebuke thee," conceiving, though erroneously, that he has thereby put an end to the possibility of supposing, that Jehovah, who speaks, is a different person from Jehovah, who will rebuke. But the consideration of this may be more conveniently taken together with the next head.

5. In the appendix, p. 81, in which he replied to Dr. Eveleigh's Sermon, Dr. Blancy has treated the learned provost's argument, as resting "on two suppositions; the one, that the Lord, who spake to Satan, is a different person from the Lord, who was called upon to rebuke him; the other, that he is no other than the angel of Jehovah, before whom Joshua was standing;" and he observes, that "both these, though assumed, as evident and unquestionable, appear to be very problematical even at the best." Dr. Blancy plainly appears to have used the word supposition in the sense of mere supposition; but it has been already shewn, that the latter of these two, which by the way ought to have been placed

first, is so far from being a mere supposition, assumed gratis, that it is capable of strict proof. With respect to the second, it must be observed, that the charge of mere supposition, whatever be its nature or its fate, rests not with Dr. Eveleigh, but with Dr. Blaney. When a writer, or a person speaking, makes himself the subject of his discourse, he ought, according to the common custom and law of all languages, to use the pronoun and verb of the first person, which have been provided specially for that purpose. There may indeed be occasions, on which he may prefer to make mention of himself in the third person; but these are extraordinary; and the use of the third person on such occasions ought to be attended with such marks, as may sufficiently point out his intention. If that ever become a matter of doubt and controversy, the charge of making a supposition does not justly rest upon the reader, who understands his author, in the use of the third person, to write or speak according to the customary forms of language; but plainly lies against him, who maintains, that the writer or speaker is the subject of his own discourse, in spite of his using the third person; and having made that supposition, the onus probandi also lies upon him.

In the present instance Dr. Blaney's supposition would be admitted directly and at once, if there were, as Socinians contend, only one person in the Deity, because then there could be no place for doubt. But the Trinitarian will not be so easily brought to assent to it. He has no difficulty in believing, that one person of the Godhead may speak of another, and consequently can discern herein no *prima facie* evidence of a departure from the common form of speech. Now Dr. Blaney not having brought forward any proof of his supposition, it remains, in the eyes of the Trinitarian, a mere supposition; and even if it were proved, since it has been also proved before, that the angel of Jehovah is no other than Jehovah, the only conclusion, that he could allow to be fairly deducible therefrom, would be, that the angel spake of himself, as Jehovah, in the third person.

Dr. Blaney supposes with some exultation, that Dr. Eveleigh's argument "loses the shadow of probability, if we put the word rebuke in the future tense; "Jehovah will rebuke thee." That consequence is by no means apparent. For if we maintain the angel of Jehovah to be the Son of God, what is there to hinder his saying, Jehovah, meaning God the Father, will rebuke thee? The true consequence is, that if the word be put

in the future tense, then the Lord, who speaks to Satan, may be either the same person, as the Lord who will rebuke him, or he may be a different person: but if the word be put in the imperative or optative mood, "Jehovah rebuke thee," then Jehovah, the speaker, must of necessity be a different person from him, who is called upon to rebuke. But are we necessarily obliged to read the word in the future tense? Every body knows, and even here Dr. Blaney himself allows*, that the "future tense in Hebrew may be, and frequently is, used to denote the imperative." The question then may safely be referred to the decision of authority; and that decision will be found in favour of our authorized English version. The LXX present the word in the optative†, and the Vulgate in the imperative mood‡. The Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic are not competent to act as arbitrators; but their translators have uniformly rendered in the imperative§. There is however an authority yet to be produced, which may decide the question, the authority of St. Jude, who, citing the text, follows the LXX and reads the word in the optative, "The Lord rebuke thee." Justified by these high authorities our excellent

* Appendix, p. 81.

† *Ἐπιτιμήτω.*

‡ *Increpet.*

§ *Increpet.*

English translation in this instance stands unimpeachable, and continues to prove to every intelligent and unprejudiced reader, that the Lord, who spake to Satan, is not the same person with the Lord, who is invoked to rebuke him, and that consequently there does exist a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

“Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?” Joshua is designated by the demonstrative pronoun. The Lord having declared, that he had chosen Jerusalem to be the habitation of his glory and the centre of his true and spiritual worship, immediately adverts to the high-priest, as the proper and constituted instrument for effecting his gracious purposes. He is compared to a brand plucked out of the fire; saved, but saved, as it were with difficulty, out of the greatest hazards, and not without many special interpositions of the divine providence. The declaration being expressed in the form of a negative question, is thereby rendered the stronger and more impressive. We are led to consider not only the greatness of the peril, but the might exerted in the preservation, and consequently the high value set on that, which was not redeemed but by no mighty an effort and at such vast expence. During the reigns of such ungodly tyrants, as Ahas, Manasseh, and Jehoiakim, the high-priesthood

must have exposed the individual, who held it, and his family to no small peril, if they continued in any degree faithful to their charge ; and the like dangers must frequently have surrounded them in the idolatrous country of Babylon, during their captivity there ; so that the family of Aaron may have had many narrow, though unrecorded, escapes, or to speak more properly, deliverances. But the chief evil, to which the priesthood and priestly family had been exposed, and from which they were now delivered, was that of total abolition and rejection, on account of sin ; the sins of priests and people too. From this they were snatched, as a brand plucked out of the fire*, by the most marvellous act of mercy, through the precious blood of the Lamb, which in the purpose of God was slain from the foundation of the world, and to which he had respect in once more accepting the Jews for his people and reinstating the high-priest in his office.

Upon receiving this deep and keen rebuke, we may reasonably believe, that Zechariah saw Satan retreat, as the same evil spirit did, when rebuked by the same person in his incarnate state. Indeed the prophet, not obscurely, intimates as much in the next words, where Joshua's standing in the judgement seems opposed to Satan's retiring from it.

* Amos, iv. 11. Jude, 23.

3. Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and stood before the angel.

This text clearly shews, that the ground of Satan's opposition to Joshua was sin, which in scripture is represented as defiling the garments of the sinner*; not however, as Dr. Blaney seems to suppose, the "moral pollution" of Joshua personally; for although he had no doubt his original sin and his personal transgressions, yet if they could have excluded him from the high-priesthood, upon the same ground Aaron himself must have stood excluded and all his posterity. The charge lay, as we have seen, against the body of Moses, the Jewish church, as involved not only in their own guilt, but in the guilt of their ancestors, according to the penalty of the second commandment. Encouraged however and supported by the gracious declaration of the Archangel, Joshua, though still clothed in his filthy garments, was able to stand before him in that fearful judgement; for this repetition of the circumstance of Joshua's standing is emphatical, and denotes that he stood firm, kept his ground, supported himself in that awful presence, from which the wicked one, unable to stand, retired†.

* Revelation, iii. 4, Jude 23, Isaiah, lxiv. 6.

† The word "stand," is to be found in the same sense in 1 Sam. vi. 20, Jer. l. 44, Luke xxi, 36, Psalm, i. 5. "To

Dr. Blaney would read this third verse in a parenthesis; for which however there is not the least occasion nor even any plausible pretence, the particle "now," or "and," being plainly intended to connect the narrative, which had been broken off by the speech of the angel, with the end of the first verse. Such an expedient was indeed necessary to uphold Dr. Blaney's hypothesis, for without it the angel of Jehovah must be deemed to be the speaker of the following words, in which a divine attribute is assumed, iniquity is forgiven, and pardon conveyed; but that necessity is not a reason for those, who have not adopted the hypothesis, to adopt the expedient. In our received translation all is clear and void of difficulty. The particle "now," or "and," is plainly intended to resume the narrative, which had been broken by the intervention of the angel's speech, and to connect it with the end of the first verse.

4. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass away from thee and I have clothed thee with change of raiment, and have said, let them set a clean turband on his head.

stand before a judge," says Taylor, "is to be acquitted; not to stand, is to be condemned." Ezra, ix. 15, Psalm, cxxx. 3.

The Archangel judge issued his commands to the ministering spirits, who stood before him, or around his tribunal. The sense is perfectly clear. But Dr. Blaney in pursuit of his object has set aside the plain tenor of the narrative, and having shut up the third verse in a parenthesis, has ascribed the command in the fourth to the voice of Jehovah, proceeding either from heaven or from the sanctuary, and directed to attendant angels. Now since Zechariah was neither in heaven nor in the sanctuary, for he was where Joshua stood before the angel of the Lord, and that Dr. Blaney informs us was in the outer court, it is certain that neither Jehovah, who spake, nor the angels, whom he addressed, could be seen by the prophet. Yet he expresses himself after the manner of an eye-witness, recounting this among other things that passed before him, without any mark to distinguish it from the rest. Therefore, unless we are willing to convict Zechariah of using a very improper style of narrative, we must conclude that Dr. Blaney has erred in supposing him to rehearse the words of an unseen speaker, addressed to persons, who are also unseen*. On the other hand, when it is considered, that Joshua has twice been said to stand before the angel of the Lord, there is no difficulty,

* Compare Dr. Blaney's notes on the 3d and 4th verses.

but the reverse of all difficulty, the readiest consent of the mind, in believing, that the angel of the Lord, before whom Joshua stood, is the person, before whom the attendants mentioned in this verse are also described as standing. These attendants are introduced to our notice in the usual abrupt manner of Zechariah; but there is no reason to doubt, that they were angels subject to the orders of the supreme judge, as the horsemen in the first part of the vision were to their chief. From Dr. Blaney's version and notes it seems impossible to collect any reason, why the angel of the Lord is introduced at all, much less why Joshua is said to stand before him. He neither acts nor speaks in the matter, which is especially stated to be transacted in his presence; he is degraded to wait in an outer court; yet even there he waits to no purpose that we can learn; for he cannot be one of those who stand before Jehovah, since they, no less than Jehovah, must be unseen; in short he is nothing more than a bystander, a spectator in the business; a mere piece of dumb shew in this portion of the visionary drama.

Discarding then Dr. Blaney's hypothesis and the means, by which he would support it, we immediately perceive and acknowledge, that it was the Archangel, the Son of God, who answered

or addressed himself to those who stood before him; commanding them to strip Joshua of his filthy garments. This was a symbolical act, signifying that all moral and ceremonial, all personal and national pollution, was alike removed from him, and that there was no longer any ground of condemnation, or any charge lying against him, that could interfere with the due discharge of his high office. The command being directed to the angels, their instant obedience to it, the act of divesting Joshua of his unseemly clothing, afforded the most lively token to them, that the high-priest of the Jews was now become a proper object of their ministrations, and that they might give him their willing and strenuous aid in dispensing the treasures of grace to God's people.

Then turning to Joshua, the Archangel judge explained the meaning of the thing commanded, "behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass away from thee;" that is to say, I have removed from off thee all that load of guilt, which pressed thee down, disabled thee from appearing in the presence of God, and left his people without a temple and an acceptable high priest to present their holy things before him. To this he adds, "and I have clothed thee* with change of

* The verb לבוש is in the infinitive mood, and is connected by the prefix ו with the preceding perfect tense, in the

raiment. The Hebrew word rendered "change of raiment" denotes a sort of dress, which was worn only on occasions of ceremony, or of festivity, and was afterwards put off and laid aside for the dress of common days. Now since the sort of habit here mentioned is opposed to the filthy garments, in which Joshua was clad, and since the dress of the high-priest on the great day of atonement was a robe of fine white linen, it is highly probable, that, by the change of raiment in this place, we are to understand that very habit. This is the more probable, when we consider how suitable that habit appears to the present occasion, in which all the benefit of atonement is conveyed in the remission of sins. For

time of which, it ought to be rendered, as we afterwards find it in cap. vii. 5. The like occurs again in cap. xii. 10, except that the preceding verb is there in the future tense, which the infinitive of course follows. Archbishop Newcome and Dr. Blaney upon the authority of the Chaldee, Vulgate, and Syriac, without any manuscript, would change the נָשָׂא into נֶשֶׂא ; and in like manner the Archbishop would on very slight authority insert נֶשֶׂא in נָשָׂא ; but in respect to this last proposal, Dr. Blaney observes, that "the use of the infinitive mood by enallage is deemed agreeable to the Hebrew idiom;" in proof of which he cites Buxtorf Thes. Gram. lib. 2, cap. 16. Since he admits the use of this enallage, there seems to be little reason for the assent he so decidedly gives to the former alteration, whose only recommendation is, that it steers clear of that figure; and the less still, since in his notes on cap. vii. 5, xii. 10, we find Dr. Blaney explaining the two infinitives נָשָׂא and נֶשֶׂא by enallage, and again citing the authority of Buxtorf; to which we may add that of Glassii Philolog. sac. lib. 3. tract 3, cap. 44, and Schröderi, Institutiones Ling. Heb. Synt. Reg. 54.

thus the two clauses of the sentence aptly correspond; for as the putting away of the high-priest's unworthiness was represented by stripping him of his filthy garments, so his restoration to the full dignity and exercise of his office is denoted by the resumption of the sacred vestments, which he was wont to wear in celebrating those awful solemnities of religion, which are most analogous to what is passing in the scene before us. Moreover, as the exclusion of the high-priest from his office was the consequence of the sin of the people in whose behalf he officiated, so the putting away of his iniquity includes the pardon of theirs, and by his restoration is signified their acceptance before God, as his chosen people. Only let us be careful how we consider this act of restoration as personal to Joshua. We must behold in it the restitution of his office, the reintegration of the high-priesthood itself, and of the whole sacerdotal ministry, in short the reappointment of the sons of Aaron to the honours of their family and the acceptance of their service in the worship of God.

Here it is to be observed, that the whole procedure is carried on without any reference to the works of the law; independently of any sacrifice or offering whatever. It is even represented to be antecedent in the nature of things to the

Mosaic ritual; for it is made the ground, on which the high-priest himself and his office are admissible to the divine presence and favour, and consequently a prerequisite to ensure the acceptance of those sacrifices and rites, which it was his duty to offer and to celebrate. Hence the Jews might certainly collect, that their righteousness, or justified state before God, did not consist in the observance of legal ordinances, as having any essential virtue in them, but was altogether, as St. Paul expresses it, "a righteousness of God," originating in his free grace and mercy, and connected with external rites only in consequence of his institution. Hence also the high-priest might well understand, when he offered intercession or made atonement for the people, that his ministry was accepted, not from any merit or inherent sanctity in himself or in his office, but from the mere grace of God regarding in him the representative of the great anointed high-priest to come.

"And have said*, let them set a clean turband on his head." Our English version renders, in conformity with the vowel points, "and I said,;" that is, Zechariah said. Nothing surely can be

* The word וַיֹּאמֶר should be pointed as in the infinitive mood. It is connected with the infinitive וַיֹּאמֶר by Vau, and consequently should be rendered like that as a perfect tense, because of the preceding perfect. But although I thus

less becoming and therefore more improbable, than that the prophet should interrupt the awful scene of judgement by any uncalled for interference, much more by a command of his own. No other prophetic vision affords an example of the kind. The spirit of the prophet in all instances appears so subdued by the consciousness of his own immense inferiority to the celestial beings around him, that the utmost pitch of daring, to which he can bring himself, is to solicit information or to hazard an humble remark. For this reason and for the critical ones assigned in the last two notes, I have so rendered the passage, as to continue the Archangel's discourse to Joshua to the end of the first clause of the fifth verse, and to make that the end of the fourth. "I have caused thine iniquity to pass away from thee, and have clothed thee with change of raiment, and have said, Let them set a clean turband on his head, or Let a clean turband be set on his head."

agree with Dr. Blaney, as stated in the last note, that we have here an instance of the enallage infinitivi, yet I do not agree with him in changing the person of the verb from the first to the third, preserving the same speaker, any more than I do with our English version, in changing the speaker, while we preserve the person of the verb. The angel of the Lord continues his speech, reciting to Joshua the command he had laid on the attendant angels.

M

Our English translation uses the word "mitre;" but turband is to be preferred, as conveying a juster idea of the materials and fashion of this article of the pontifical habiliments. It consisted of a long piece of the finest and whitest linen, (the Jews tell us the length of it was sixteen ells,) rolled or folded together, as the word itself according to the signification of its root implies*, so as to form a flat top, projecting all round beyond the head of the wearer†. This is expressly noticed to be clean, that so it may correspond with the robes; and since it was made of white linen, we may hence derive another argument for supposing, that the change of raiment given to Joshua consisted, not of the magnificent pontifical dress, in which the high-priest usually officiated, but of the linen garments, which he wore only on the day of expiation, when he went into the Holy of Holies.

* *ḥṣ* to roll, or turn round and round. The modern turbands in use among the people of the east are of a like make. "They all," says Harmer, "are formed of a cap of different shapes and colours, worn on the crown of the head, surmounted at the edge with a long narrow strip of silk or linen of different colours, and artfully wrapped about in different forms of convolution, according to the different nations, religions, professions, offices, and classes in life, to which the wearers respectively belong." *Observations on scripture*, vol. 3, p. 386, note. See also Parkhurst's *Hebrew Lexicon* in v. *ḥṣ*, and the authorities there cited.

† *Braunius de vestitu sacerdotum Hebræorum*, lib. 2, cap. 4 et 21.

The command being given, the attendant angels obeyed the voice of their prince;

5. So they set the clean turband on his head and clothed him with the garments,

Joshua being clothed with the pontifical raiment, immediately received a suitable charge from the angel of the Lord, before whom he stood.

6. And the angel of Jehovah stood; and the angel of Jehovah testified unto Joshua, saying,

The reader will perceive, that I have disjoined the conclusion of the fifth verse therefrom and have placed it at the beginning of the sixth, besides making a small change in the version by the omission of the particle "by." It is not easy to understand, why the angel of the Lord should be said to stand by. Dr. Blaney indeed informs us that "he stood as in waiting to receive his sovereign's commands;" a piece of information, which could hardly be necessary, since according to his interpretation, he had been so standing from the very outset of this part of the vision. But if it has been made to appear, as I trust it has, that the angel of Jehovah was the very judge, before whom Joshua and the adversary stood; that he passed sentence on Satan, and awarded to Joshua the renewed honours of the priesthood;

and that in short all, which has been described to be spoken and done, was spoken by him and done at his bidding; (and our learned translators plainly appear to have been of this mind;) then it is utterly unaccountable, that he should be immediately afterwards described as only a by-stander or an attendant. It is satisfactory therefore to be assured, that the inconsistency arises only from the translation, and is not to be found in the original Hebrew. The word in question, placed, as it here is, by itself, without any preposition following, expresses only the posture of standing, so that the adjunct, "by," is gratuitously assumed. If then we omit that superfluous particle and connect the words with the following verse, as has been done above, and as the grammatical construction of the passage naturally requires, the incongruity will vanish and the prophet's meaning will appear with the utmost clearness. The angel of Jehovah, while he acted as judge, of course sat upon his seat of judgement*. But he was now about to appear in a different character, that of a witness, as "the faithful and true witness†," testifying the will of Jehovah, the Father. He therefore assumed the posture proper to a witness, that of standing,

* Commentary, p. 134.

† John, iii, 11, Revelation, i. 5, iii. 14.

as appears from many passages of scripture*. This is with great reason noticed by the prophet, as a suitable introduction to the testimony, which he delivered. Our translators have rendered the original word, "protested;" I have followed Dr. Blaney in rendering it, "testified;" for the verse contains, not a protestation of the opinion or the resolution of the Son of God, but his testimony to the decree of the father.

7. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts; if thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee ministers among these that are standing.

These promises are given to Joshua and in him to his successors under certain conditions. "If thou wilt walk in my ways." To walk in the ways of God, is a phrase frequently used in scripture for observing that tenor of life, which is taught and marked out by his moral law. The keeping of his charge is also a phrase of frequent occurrence, and is chiefly applied to the correct and solemn celebration of the temple worship and the observance of the rites and ordinances

* Ex. gr. Numbers, v. 16, 18, 30, Leviticus, xix. 16, 1 Kings, xvii. 1, xviii. 16, 2 Kings, iii. 14, v. 16, Revelation, x. 5, 6.

appointed by the Mosaic law*. Upon the performance of the two conditions depends the performance of the promises; "Thou shalt judge my house and keep my courts;" which Dr. Blaney has observed, "is a periphrasis, for "thou shalt exercise the office and enjoy the dignities and privileges of the high-priest." As the learned professor is not here engaged to support an hypothesis, I feel the greater difficulty in dissenting from his interpretation. Yet to explain the passage by a periphrasis, seems to me not only unnecessary, but even inconsistent with its poetical structure. The verse comprises, not as Dr. Blaney seems to have supposed, a pair of synonymous, or as Bishop Jebb more aptly names them†, "cognate parallels," with a closing line, but a five-lined stanza, consisting of an alternate quatrain with a fifth line annexed‡; the third answering to the first, and the fourth to the second. Thus distinguished, the passage plainly indicates different offices conferred on the high-priest, to be held by him on different conditions. "If thou wilt walk in my ways, then thou shalt

* The word *שָׁמַר* is applied frequently to the services both of priests and Levites, and sometimes solely to the duties assigned to Aaron and his sons, as may be seen by turning to the passages cited in Taylor's Hebrew Concordance, v. *שמר*, number 118.

† Sacred Literature, p. 38.

‡ Idem, p. 31.

judge my house; if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also keep my courts."

The Hebrew word, rendered "judge," is often used in scripture in the general signification of ruling; but I believe it is never applied to any but civil magistrates; at least we need proof, that it is ever applied to the discharge of the high-priest's office, as ruling in the temple. Hence it may be inferred, that civil, not ecclesiastical, authority is the subject of the third line; and accordingly we must extend, as we may be readily allowed to do, the idea expressed by walking in God's ways, beyond the observance of his moral law by private persons, to the due performance of the duties incumbent on a governor or prince. As this is the condition, on which the high-priest is to hold that additional office, so it will be acknowledged to be a just and appropriate one. But then, the subject of judgement or government presents some difficulty. "Thou shalt judge my house." The house of God is a term so exclusively applied in the Hebrew scriptures to the tabernacle or temple, that it should seem no easy matter to bring it over to another signification. Yet in Numbers, xii. 7, it must certainly be understood in a much wider sense. "Moses is faithful in all my house." For the fidelity of Moses was conspicuous, not so much

in matters belonging to the temple service, which were committed to the oversight of Aaron, as in the rule and government of God's people. Accordingly Bishop Patrick observes on that text, that "Moses was entrusted with God's whole family, that is, with all the children of Israel." St. Paul also in Hebrews, iii. 2—6, citing the same text, has compared the house of God, under Moses, to the house of God, under Christ. Now the latter certainly signifies the christian church, wherefore the former must signify the Israelitish church or people. The office then of ruling the Jewish people, with the authority of a governor or prince, is that, which is here promised to Joshua.

Now we know that Joshua himself possessed no princely authority over the Jews; for the supreme civil power, under the Persian monarch, at the time of the vision, was exercised by Zerubbabel. But the successors of Joshua did afterwards obtain civil power and that in no mean degree. Here then it must be observed once more, that the promise is not made to Joshua personally, but generally to the high-priest, he being particularly named, only as being high-priest pro tempore. Consequently, it amounts to a prediction, that the Jewish high-priest shall at some future time, either rule as

judge, after the example of Eli, or reign as prince. This began to be fulfilled, when after the death of Nehemiah*, there being no national governor of Judea appointed by the Persian court, the prefects of Syria, within whose province the country was thenceforth comprehended, committed the chief management of its affairs to the hands of the high-priest. But it afterwards received a much fuller and more splendid accomplishment, when the Maccabean high-priests assumed the independent princely authority, and afterwards even the royal title and majesty. Had they truly performed the conditions, on which they held their double dignity, they might possibly have been permitted to preserve both, till He should come, in whom the original and supreme right to both was vested. But those princes did not long continue to walk in God's ways. They reposed a greater trust in the artifices of a temporizing, sinuous policy, than in the divine blessing on sincerity, faith and

* Those who agree with Dr. Hales; Chronology, vol. 2, p. 578, suppose Nehemiah, xii. 11, 22, to have been in the original copy of that sacred writer. Hence the argument for assigning to him a life of 130 or 140 years, extending fourscore years beyond the last events related in his book. It is much more reasonable to believe, that the two verses were added after Nehemiah's time by persons of competent authority, in conformity with what we find to have been done in other parts of the old testament.

obedience. They became jealous, tyrannical, and sanguinary, till the high and holy spirit of the heroes of freedom and religion, who gave themselves as free-will offerings for the people, was sunk in the low selfish craft of an eastern despot.

The high-priesthood, except as a part of the sovereignty, was made little account of. The charge of the Lord was not kept in purity, with a good conscience, with zealous affection. The conditions being thus violated, the promises given upon them were of course avoided. Hence it came to pass, that first the royal title, and then the princely authority were severed from the pontifical office; and after the murder of Aristobulus*, the last heir of the Asmonean family, by Herod, the high-priesthood was disposable at the capricious will of a foreign dependent sovereign, or of a Roman procurator.

But Joshua and his successors were only the types and representatives of that great high-priest

* Aristobulus, the great grandson of Alexander Jannæus, high-priest and king of the Jews, united in his own person the divided claims to those two offices. He was a youth of extraordinary beauty and personal accomplishments, perhaps also of considerable talents. These high claims and prepossessing qualities, with the popularity which they gave him, and the ambitious views and arts of his mother Alexandra, excited the jealousy of that sanguinary tyrant Herod, who caused him to be drowned almost in his own presence. Josephi Antiq. lib. 15. cap. 3, and Prideaux's Connection, p. 2, b. 8. Before Christ 35.

and king, in whom, since he could never fail to observe the conditions, the title to both offices was vested, as of original right, so by perpetual indefeasible tenure. Jehovah had sworn to him and would not repent, "Thou art priest forever after the order of Melchizedec*." To him therefore the promises made to Joshua are to be ultimately referred; in him they are still made good and will hereafter appear so to be with undeniable demonstrations of their full performance, to the conviction and punishment, if not to the timely conversion and salvation, of those who have refused to own him,

"And I will give thee ministers among these that are standing." Our English translation, for ministers, reads "places to walk." I have followed Dr. Blaney. The original word is of ambiguous signification. It may be either a noun substantive signifying paths, and so offices or ministeries; or a participle, signifying walkers, those that walk in certain appointed paths, and so officers or ministers, to whom a certain path or course of duty is prescribed. Accompanied by the pronoun "these," it is plainly pointed to the angelic attendants who were standing before the Archangel, as they are described in the fourth verse. Dr. Blaney in his note supposes, that these

* Psalm, cx, 4.

ministers are not angels, "but some of the subordinate priests who attended upon Joshua." But we have no sufficient reason for thinking, that those priests bore any part, or were represented by any emblems, in the vision. In the next verse indeed those priests are mentioned as Joshua's fellows or companions, and are said to sit before him; but it is not meant to say, that they were sitting at that instant, but ordinarily; the participle being used as an aorist of the present. The difference is not only observable, but striking, and was doubtless intended. Those are Joshua's fellows and *sit* before him, on no very unequal terms; these are angelic attendants that *stand* before the angel of Jehovah. Besides the clause forms part of the promise to Joshua; but if these walkers, or ministers, were only subordinate priests, then the promise, in this respect, not only does not exceed, but even falls short of, what Joshua might reasonably have expected; for the whole of those subordinate priests were properly his ministers, whereas it would then be promised, only that he should have ministers among them. Therefore if any subordinate priests had been represented in this part of the vision, they could not have been the persons, among whom God promised to appoint ministers to Joshua and his successors.

It has also been supposed, that the promise is referable to the blessings of eternity; to the state of glory and felicity reserved for Joshua among the angels of heaven, if he faithfully discharged the duties of his office. But the clause is so closely and immediately connected with the preceding, that it must belong to the same subject, which is not Joshua's state of being in the life to come, but the augmented extent, dignity, and splendour of the pontifical office. God declares, that if Joshua and his successors duly and faithfully keep his commandments and discharge their trust, he will annex the civil government to the priesthood; and that for the effectual and successful exercise of the powers of both, he will grant them the potent though invisible aid of his angels, directing their counsels, animating their efforts, and furthering them unto completion.

Joshua is next exhorted with great authority to attend very particularly to the important instruction, about to be delivered to him by the Archangel in the words of Jehovah, the Father.

8. Hear now, O Joshua the high-priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee; for men of sign are they: for behold I am about to
9. introduce my servant, the BRANCH. For behold the stone, which I have set before

Joshua; upon one stone seven eyes. Behold I am the engraver of the engraving thereof, saith Jehovah of hosts, and I have removed the iniquity of that land in one day.

Joshua is now for the first time saluted by his title of office. The verb is in the singular number, which excludes the assessors of Joshua from being the persons immediately addressed. In the following words also they are mentioned in the third person, from both which circumstances we may satisfactorily collect, that they did not form a part of the assemblage of persons in this part of the vision, but are only summoned to attend together with Joshua to the divine behests delivered to them by the prophet. "Hear thou, and let them hear." If indeed they were present, it is hard to conceive why they are not directly addressed.

"For men of sign are they;" that is to say, they, as well as thou. The words certainly cannot be intended to exclude Joshua, but only to include the others with him, as being concerned in the signs about to be exhibited. The text of our authorized English version renders the words, "for they are men wondered at," the meaning of which it is not easy to discern. I have followed the rendering adopted from the Vulgate*

* Viri portendentes. See Lowth's Comment. in the place.

by Lowth and others, and followed by Dr. Blaney, which gives to the original word its proper signification, expressed by the same term, which our translators have used for it four times in the prophet Ezekiel*. They are men of sign or symbolical men, the present representatives of persons, who are to come hereafter; and who will appear in the following part of the vision, signified by different emblems. Dr. Blaney, by his rendering "*these are men of sign,*" has endeavoured to point the words to the persons, whom the angel describes as standing, as if those persons had been nothing more than subordinate priests. Yet how they are to be standing, and at the same time (for by his interpretation, the time is restrained to the actual or passing present,) sitting before Joshua, he has not explained. The important reason for the solemn call to attention above given is next declared.

"For behold I am about to introduce my servant, the **BRANCH**." The Branch is given as a title or a description of the Messiah in many passages of the prophets. By Isaiah† he is predicted as the Branch of the Lord, beautiful and glorious, and as a Branch rising out of the roots of Jesse, upon whom the spirit of the Lord

* Ezekiel, xii. 6, 11, xxiv. 24, 27.

† Isaiah, iv. 2. xi. 1, lx. 21.

shall rest without measure; and his mystical body, the church, is figured as the Branch of Jehovah's planting. By Jeremiah* he is foretold as a righteous Branch, which the Lord will raise unto David, a mighty, just, and prosperous king, "whose name shall be called JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS;" and again as a Branch of righteousness growing up to David, reigning and bearing the same divine proper name. With these passages before them, it is wonderful that Grotius or any interpreter should have supposed Zerubbabel to be the person intended by the Branch.

"Neither here," says Dr. Blaney, "nor chapter vi. 12, is Zerubbabel named; nor is there any reasonable ground to conclude that he is designed in either place by the title of "The Branch." It is true, he was a descendant from David and appointed under the authority of the Kings of Persia to be a subordinate governor of the Jews, who returned from Babylon; and in that capacity he presided, and took an active part with Joshua the high-priest, and with the chief of the fathers, in forwarding the building of the temple. But there surely does not appear in what we know of

* Jeremiah, xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15. That Dr. Blaney appealing to the decision of the LXX, as he does in his note, p. 146, should have rendered these two texts as he has done, is a striking proof of the effect of a favourite hypothesis in warping an ingenuous and enlightened understanding.

his character or performances any thing to merit the particular notice imagined to be here taken of him. The same person must needs be intended here, as is spoken of under the same title, Jeremiah, xxiii. 5; nor is it conceivable, that terms so magnificent, as those used in this latter place especially, can be applicable to one of so limited power and authority, as Zerubbabel enjoyed. Besides it is evident, that the Branch is promised, as one, that was to come or to be brought forth, and not as one, that had already enjoyed his estate, such as it was, for many years past. In short, for these and for many other reasons it may be concluded against Zerubbabel, and I think against any other of less consequence, than the great Messiah himself, through whom alone iniquity is put away, and the reign of perfect peace and righteousness is to be established."

Not only is Zerubbabel not mentioned in vi. 12, but the reason there given for the application of the title, the Branch, to the person who bears it, is such, as plainly to exclude Zerubbabel; namely, because "he shall branch forth out of his place," spread his sovereign power far and wide, which Zerubbabel never did, nor ever had an opportunity of doing. Moreover he is said to be "a priest upon his throne," which nowise corresponds with the office or acts of Zerubbabel.

The Messiah is called by the Father, "my servant," in conformity with many other passages in the prophets, where he is described, says Mr. Lowth*, as the servant of God in an eminent sense, because he was "sanctified and sent into the world" upon a message of the highest importance. Thus in Isaiah, xlii. 1, he is predicted by God the Father as his servant; and the prediction is in Matthew, xii. 18, cited and applied by our Lord to himself. Again in Isaiah, lii. 13, he is introduced, as the servant of the Lord, in whom were to be mingled the extremes of exaltation and depression, even of such depression, as is described in the following chapter; at the close of which it is said of him, "my servant† shall justify the just man before many, for he shall bear their iniquities." Other texts are cited by Mr. Lowth, in which our Lord is foretold as a servant; and all these are justified by those passages of the new testament‡, in which he speaks of himself, as "come to minister," as "one that

* Commentary on the text.

† Our authorized version renders "my righteous servant;" erroneously, as I conceive, because so the adjective precedes the substantive עַבְדִּי contrariwise to the rule of Hebrew grammar. The doctrine of justification by faith is here predicted. The just man is justified only by the justification, which God has ordained.

‡ Matthew, xx. 28. Luke, xxii. 27. John, xiii. 4—16. Philippians, ii. 7.

serveth," and is described by the apostle Paul, as "having taken upon him the form of a servant."

"For behold the stone, which I have set before Joshua; upon one stone seven eyes." The particle "for" begins three clauses in succession. In the first it introduces the reason of Joshua and his associates being summoned to give particular attention, namely, that they were men of sign; in the second it assigns the reason of their being called men of sign, as being the representatives of the Branch and his servants; in the third it gives the reason for the declaration, that God is about to introduce the Branch, that is to say, because the Branch immediately appears.

Yet after all he is not here exhibited to the view of the prophet under that image, which indeed never proceeds farther than a metaphor, at least is not any where used for a symbolical representation. But another figure, that of a stone, is applied to the Messiah in both ways; and under that he is here brought before us. "For behold the stone." This no doubt appeared as soon as the archangel had uttered the words; and since its appearance instantly succeeded and fulfilled the promise of the Branch, we may thence collect with certainty, that the figurative name and the symbolical representation are both intended to meet in the same person. The earliest passage of the old testament, in which Christ is

represented under the latter figure, occurs in the blessing of Jacob upon Joseph, where the aged patriarch, after alluding to the malicious but abortive attempt of his brethren to destroy or ruin him, ascribes the power he attained in Egypt and the means he thence derived of sustaining his father and penitent brethren, to the immediate blessing of God. "But his bow abode in might, and his hands* strengthened my arms, by the hands of the mighty one of Jacob, by the name† of the shepherd, the stone of

* Genesis, xlix. 24. "The arms of his hands were made strong," which is the rendering of our English version, is justly objected to by Durell and Houbigant. The latter, upon little else than conjecture, would read *וְיָמָיו* and omit *וְיָמָיו*; a coarse and violent mode of getting rid of a difficulty. The former, admitting *וְיָמָיו*, proposes a new rendering, "his hands bent its arms," meaning the extremities of the bow, which although adopted by Dr. Hales (Chronology, v, 2, p. 165,) is so strained and far fetched, as to be much less admissible, than what we find in our translation. I hope that, which I have ventured to give, may be deemed at least more plausible. A man's arms, in the language of scripture, are any thing, in which his strength consists. Jacob's arms therefore are his family, his property. In Genesis, xlv. 11, Joseph observes that without his assistance "his father and all that he had might come to poverty." If we follow Schultens and Simonis in deriving the signification of the verb from the Arabic, we may still give it a transitive rendering; "his arms lightened my hands," i. e. rendered them active, which else were torpid through age and grief.

† "Thence is the shepherd" &c. that is to say, from the mighty one of Jacob, or from Jacob himself, according to the flesh. Such is the language and meaning of our authorized version, putting the words in an awkward parenthesis. But since this line and the following, as well as the

Israel*." The title given by the dying patriarch was not forgotten or laid aside by his successors in prophecy. The Psalmist knew and acknowledged the Messiah, as "the stone which though refused by the pretended builders of God's temple, was destined to become the head of the corner†." Isaiah also foretold him, as "Jehovah himself, the fear and the dread of Israel, the sanctuary of true believers, and the stone of stumbling and rock of offence to the impenitent and perverse of both the houses of Israel‡;" and in another place, as "a stone, laid by Jehovah for a foundation in Zion, a tried stone, a precious stone, a sure foundation§." Lastly, Daniel revealed him to Nebuchadnezzar, as "the stone, which cut out without hands smote the great

preceding, all begin with the prefix נ, it is requisite, that it should be rendered alike in all. I have therefore followed Durell in rendering נֶחֱבֵה, "by the name." The name of God, as he observes, frequently denotes his nature or attributes, and so may be here used for his power; the power of the shepherd, the stone of Israel. Durell would omit נֶחֱבֵה, but upon grounds too slight to merit attention. See his parallel Prophecies, p. 95—97.

* Rosenmüller, (Scholion in loc.) puts נֶחֱבֵה in construction with נֶחֱבֵה and renders, pastor lapidis Israelis, supposing Jacob to allude to the stone, on which he rested his head in his flight to Padan Aram; Genesis, xxviii. 11. The shepherd of a stone is, I believe, an image, that will commend itself to few readers.

† Psalm, cxviii. 22, ‡ Isaiah, viii. 13, 14.

§ Isaiah, xxviii. 16.

and terrible image of earthly empire and became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*"

When Messiah came, he emphatically applied these predictions to himself in that indignant and searching question to the chief priests and elders; "Did ye never read in the scriptures; the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner†?" For although, as the occasion led him, he especially cited one only of those prophecies, yet, when he asserted himself to be that stone, he really applied them all. In the well known and much contested passage also‡, in which he alluded to the signification of Peter's name, as the rock, he makes the confession of faith in himself, as "the Son of man, the Christ, the Son of the living God," to be the stone, on which his church is to be built; which amounts to the same thing as making himself the foundation of it.

The Apostles, following the example of their master and guided by the Holy Ghost, appropriated the same prophecies to him, either by special citation or by representing him under the figure of the stone. In their first controversy with the

* Daniel, ii. 34, 35, 44, 45.

† Matthew, xxi. 42—44, Mark, xii. 10, 11, Luke, xx, 17.

‡ Matthew, xvi. 13—18. See Bishop Horsley's Sermon on Matthew, xvi. 18, 19.

Jewish rulers, Peter expressly asserted the sole claim of Jesus to be the corner stone of the church of them that are saved. "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*." The same apostle at a later period represented the members of the Church, as "lively stones, built up into a spiritual house upon the chief corner stone Jesus Christ†," citing the two predictions of Isaiah and that in Psalm, cxviii. St. Paul also assured his Ephesian converts, that they were "no longer strangers and foreigners in the city and territory of the living God, but members of his very household, built up into an holy temple upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone‡." In using the terms "the foundation of the apostles and prophets," St. Paul did not mean to say, that christians were built upon the apostles and prophets, as being the foundation on which the spiritual temple was raised; but that they were built upon the foundation, which the apostles and prophets laid in their preaching, and upon

* Acts, iv, 11, 12.

† 1 Peter, ii. 4—8.

‡ Ephesians, ii. 19, 20, 21.

which they themselves stood, even Jesus Christ. Accordingly, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, he speaks of himself, "as a wise master-builder laying the foundation of their church; and although another," he says, "may build upon it, yet he can lay no other foundation, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ*." Lastly, in the epistle to the Romans, he alludes to Isaiah, viii, 14, representing Christ, as "the stumbling stone, at which the Jews for want of faith stumbled†." From this collection of passages it undeniably appears, not only that Christ himself is typified by the stone set before Joshua, but that the image is one, which the divine spirit, who inspired the prophets and apostles, regarded, if I may so speak, with peculiar complacency. In like manner David dwells with great frequency and evident delight on the idea of God, as his rock, varying the form of expression in many ways, of which we find a notable instance in Psalm, xviii. 1.

"Upon one stone seven eyes." Our english version inserts in italics the verb substantive in the future tense; "upon one stone shall be seven eyes." There does not appear to be any good reason for supposing, that the stone did not appear with the eyes actually sculptured upon it.

* 1 Corinthians, iii. 10, 11.

† Romans, ix. 32, 33.

The preceding verb is in the past tense, and since the mention of the sculptures is immediately connected with it, and nothing is hinted to denote futurity, it is unreasonable to imagine that the stone appeared in a totally plain and unsculptured state. It might with equal probability be supposed that no stone appeared at all. The antitypes indeed were future, but the types were visible to Zechariah. The LXX and the Vulgate followed by Archbishop Newcome, express the verb substantive in the present tense, and Dr. Blaney has preceded me in entirely omitting the verb.

It is to be regretted, that the learned Professor has departed more widely from our English text by giving a new version of these words; "From one stone seven fountains*." But he is not the

* I hope it will not be considered harsh or disrespectful to say, that the learned Professor has committed two errors in the version above given. The preposition *by* has not the meaning of the English one, "from," as it denotes beginning, proceeding, issuing forth. Noldius indeed gives "a, ab," as its second signification and cites fifteen or sixteen examples; but if those examples be closely examined, it will appear, that although the idiom of the Latin or English tongues may admit the use of the prepositions, *ab* or *from*, in a version which does not strictly adhere to the letter of the original, yet they do not properly express the force of the Hebrew *by*. Our learned translators have not rendered it by "from" in any one of the examples cited by Noldius. It is therefore not too much to say, that in the instance before us the meaning of the Hebrew is misrepresented when the preposition is rendered "from." The

original author of this rendering, for which he is indebted to Vitringa, who has endeavoured to support it by referring to a text in Genesis*, but with so little success, that we may reasonably suppose his failure to be the cause, that Dr. Blaney has passed over in silence both his authority and his citation. The learned professor supposes, that a plain allusion is here made to the rock smitten by Moses, "which rock," says St. Paul, "was Christ." But the allusion, so far as it is particularly pointed to Exodus, xvii. 6, arises out of the new version; it must stand or fall therewith; and in the notes it is shewn, how

second error is that, by which the Hebrew עַיִן is rendered fountains instead of eyes. Now the Hebrew word, although in the singular number it signifies either a fountain or an eye, whether of the two must be determined by the exigency of the passage, yet in the plural number expresses the two different significations by two different forms; the masculine form always signifying eyes, the feminine being as regularly used for fountains. Not a single instance can be produced of these forms being unfounded; nor does Dr. Blaney allege any to justify his deviation from the authorized version and the established usage of the Hebrew tongue. This is the main thing he ought to have done, and the rest of his critical annotation is nothing to the purpose without it.

* The text is Genesis, xxxviii. 14, עַיִן בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּעֵינַיִם, which our translators render, "sat in an open place, which is by the way of Timnath," giving us in the margin, "Heb. the door of eyes, or, of enayim." The learned critic renders the word, "in apertione fontium," and cites the authority of Onkelos, whose Chaldee words he renders "in divisione fontium." The Latin version of the Targum in the London

very little reason there is for assenting to that. On the other hand also, there are many passages, to which the words will be found to allude, if the rendering given in our authorized version be allowed to stand. But since the subjects denoted by the seven eyes on the stone will be explained at large in the commentary on the next part of the vision, it is unnecessary to say more at present, than that they are intended to represent the angels of God subject to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, and bringing to pass the counsels of his providence, in the protection, support, and extension of his kingdom of grace.

“Behold I am the engraver of the engraving thereof, saith Jehovah of hosts.” Dr. Blaney has followed up his new version of the preceding

Polyglot gives “in divisione fontium,” but Bunsen renders “in divisione fontium.” See his Chaldee Lexicon, col. 1855. The truth is, that the alleged authority of Onkelos in this instance is no authority at all, it being as much on the one side as the other. Instead of explicitly rendering the Hebrew word, he has merely given us the same in the Chaldee form, in which it is ambiguous; for the Chaldee has not followed the Hebrew in separating in the plural number the two significations of the singular. But if Onkelos had thought fit to use them, there were Chaldee words at hand, which would have expressed his meaning without ambiguity. Therefore the probability is, that Onkelos considered the meaning of the word to be doubtful in this place, and did not choose to commit himself by giving it a decided interpretation. The LXX agree with the latter marginal rendering of the English bible, in making the word *προς* a proper name; *προς ταις πυλαις Αιναν*.

words by a correspondent one of these; "Behold, I open the passage thereof." The rendering of our English translation having been sufficiently vindicated in the former instance, it is unnecessary to prove the correctness of it in this also; else means sufficient are at hand. I concur, however, with him in translating by the present tense, for the reason given in the commentary on the foregoing clause, instead of the future, as in our authorized version, from which I have also departed a little farther, by rendering the participle as a noun substantive, which there is rendered as a verb. This has been done in order to mark more pointedly, what I believe to be the intention of the divine speaker whose words are rehearsed, namely, to declare himself emphatically the sculptor of the emblems on the stone. The declaration contains a plain and direct allusion to the ten commandments of the law, which are expressly said to have been written, or engraven, on two tables of stone by the finger of God*. Therefore God is equally the sculptor of both. At the same time an opposition between the two is here clearly intimated. The law of the

* Exodus, xxxi. 18, xxxii. 16, Deuteronomy, ix. 10. In the second of these passages, the writing of God is said to be *קָטָוּת* engraved on the tables, which the LXX render by *κεικολλημένη*, and St. Paul, 2 Corinthians, iii. 7, by *επιτετυπωμένη*.

tables worketh wrath, condemnation, and death; but Christ is the author of peace, righteousness, and life; and so the stone, which is the type of him, is engraved not with that letter, which killeth, but with the emblems of those ministering spirits, who are sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation, as agents under the divine Angel of that better covenant.

“And I have removed the iniquity of that land in one day.” The person by whom the iniquity of that land, meaning not Judea only, but the whole dominions of Christ on earth, is removed, having been introduced under the well known figure of a stone, the verb expressing that removal is properly put in the past tense*. For though the event be future in reality, it is not so in regard to the emblematical representation of it. It is therefore a departure both from the sense and letter of the passage to render it in the future.

* Not only our authorized translation, but the ancient versions, with Archbishop Newcome and Dr. Blaney, have rendered the verb in the future tense, as if converted by the prefixed Vau. I suppose they considered the future of the verb substantive to be understood with the participle כִּסְּוֹה, and therefore according to the rule laid down by grammarians, the perfect to be converted into the same time. “Sæpe fit, ut futurum, quocum præteritum futuri significationem induens copulatur, vel per ellipsin suppressum sit, vel in præcedenti infinitivo aut participio implicite continuatur. 1 Samuel, ii. 31, Jeremiah, xxi. 9.” Shroederi Institutiones ling. Heb. p. 337.

To any one, who will be at the pains of examining attentively what Vitringa and Dr. Blaney have written on this verse, it will be evident, that if they were not led into the erroneous rendering of seven fountains, instead of seven eyes, they were confirmed, or at least conceived themselves to be justified and supported therein, by this clause. If indeed the Hebrew word* rendered "removed," could be proved to signify washing, or removing by means of water, they would have had some grounds for so thinking. But it is nowhere used in that sense or applied to that purpose; and therefore affords no countenance to the new rendering, which itself ought to be fully established, before it could impart a particular

* נָחַץ . Some difficulty attends this word. It is commonly referred to the radix נָחַץ : but in all other passages where that verb occurs in Kal, it is used in an intransitive sense. Dr. Blaney therefore observes, that it should regularly have been in Hiphil. Mr. Parkhurst in his Lexicon refers it to the root נָחַץ ; which according to other Lexicographers signifies "extraxit," and has that signification in the three places of scripture, in which only it is certainly found. But Mr. Parkhurst, by the help of a rule laid down in a note at p. 14 of his Hebrew grammar, absorbs the verb נָחַץ in נָחַץ , to which latter he ascribes the senses of the other verb both in Kal and Hiphil. Hence he finds no difficulty in rendering the verb transitively in this text. Hebrew scholars well know that verbs of the three forms, defective, as they are called in double Gnain, and quiescent in Gnain Vau and Lamed He, often interchange their forms, or, as Bishop Horsley expresses it, "possess an intercommunity of signification." Accordingly the LXX have here rendered the verb by $\psiηλαφησω$, in the signification of נָחַץ , palpavit, contrectavit, in which they are followed by the Syriac and

sense to a word of general signification. Surely it is much more consistent with analogy to believe, that the word is used in correspondence with the former figure, by which the removal of sin was expressed, that is to say, by stripping Joshua of his filthy garments.

Admitting then all the respect justly due to the high authorities on the opposite side, we may still allow ourselves to retain the received version of this passage, and consider the stone engraved by the finger of God with seven eyes, not only in general as an emblem of Him, whom Jacob predicted, as the stone of Israel, but as corresponding, in respect to the sculpture upon it, with that other figure, under which he is represented as the Lamb with seven eyes*. The Lamb is again described as the husband of

Arabic, while the Chaldee has rendered by *ܐܦܗܠ*, in Aphel, as if the Hebrew verb had been in Hiphil, herein agreeing with the Vulgate, which has "auferam." The significations of the verbs *אָפַר* in Hiphil, and *אָפַר* in Kal, are very near of kin; and that of the latter appears to be well adapted to this place: I have extracted, taken out, or in a more general form of expression, I have removed the iniquity of that land; for it answers to the figure, by which the removal of Joshua's iniquity was exhibited in the fourth and fifth verses of this chapter. The omission of the Iod in the penultimate will not hinder its being referred to *אָפַר*; because the Iod is sometimes omitted in the first persons of the verbs in Lamed He; or the verb in Lamed He may be considered as assuming the form of that in Gasm Vau.

* Revelation, v. 6.

the bride*, to whom it is granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; and we have seen the Archangel granting the same honour to Joshua, and in him to the church. The fine white linen, we are informed signifies "the righteousness of the saints," consequent on the forgiveness of their sins; and accordingly we find the divine declaration immediately following the introduction of the stone. "I have removed the iniquity of that land in one day."

The iniquity of the whole land, that contains the chosen people of God, the spiritual Israel, was effectually removed in one day; in the day, that "Christ died unto sin once†," once for all. For "once‡ only did he appear to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," that we might be sanctified "through the offering, which he made once for all§." And having been thus "offered once || to bear the sins of many," when he shall appear the second time to them, who look for him, it will be unto salvation, but without a sin-offering¶.

10. In that day, saith Jehovah of hosts, yeshall call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig-tree.

* Idem, xix. 7, 8. † Romans, vi. 10.

‡ Hebrews, ix. 26. § Idem, x. 10. || Idem, ix. 28. ¶ Ibid.

The tranquillity and happiness of a people reposing in profound peace, plenty, and security, is sometimes represented in scripture by the image of men enjoying themselves under their own vines and fig-trees; and they are here farther represented in the liberal spirit of ancient times, stationing themselves*, like Abraham at the door of his tent, and inviting travellers to take a share of their repose and abundance†. The order of the prediction and of the corresponding events directs us to interpret this beautiful allusion of the earnest desires and strenuous endeavours of the apostles and other primitive christians to convert the heathen world. They were taught by their heavenly master to consider every man in need, as their neighbour; and accordingly they are here figured, while resting in the tranquillity and plenteousness of evangelical peace and blessing, as calling to all the way-faring men, who needed such refreshment in the journey through life, to partake with them in their ease and comfort, in the meat and drink that endure unto everlasting life.

* See Genesis, xviii. 1—5.

† Harmer's observations, vol. 3, p. 203, which is cited by Dr. Blaney, who, without following, does not dissent from his exposition.

PART V.

GAP. IV. 1—14.

THE Almighty, having revealed in the fourth part of the vision his purpose of saving his church by the remission of sins through Him who was prophetically made known to it under the image of the stone of Israel, the foundation and chief corner stone, and of administering its affairs and exercising the powers of government over it through the same holy and divine person, in this part condescends further to open his counsel, and to reveal the future constitution of the church in the times of Messiah, under a very significant and splendid figure, as a perfect whole, consisting of two grand divisions, formed into one spiritual community, growing up from small beginnings to a vast and indefinite extent independently of all human power, united, nourished, supported, guided by his divine word and spirit, whose manifold gifts and graces are

communicated and supplied through the ministry of persons duly appointed and ordained to that end. The truth of the above mentioned declarations, as really proceeding from the Almighty, is testified by an appeal to the performance of a promise shortly to take effect.

1. And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me as a man that is wakened out of his sleep ; and said unto me, what seest thou ?

At this period of the vision the interpreting angel, who in the third part had quitted the side of Joshua to attend and witness, perhaps also to superintend, the measuring of Jerusalem, and was dispatched with a message to the measurer, returned and found the prophet deeply musing on the important but deeply mysterious emblems, which had lately been set before his eyes. The angelic minister now, we may suppose, fully instructed in the counsels of God respecting the church, as having witnessed the execution of the orders, with which he was intrusted, is able to unfold, as far as he is permitted to do it, the signification of the images which are next presented to Zechariah's view. He therefore roused the prophet from his reverie, and by his question called his attention to another set of emblems, which are described to us in the words of his reply to the angel.

2. And I said*, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, and a bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps upon it; seven and seven†! Pipes are there to the seven
3. lamps, which are upon the top of it; and two olive-trees beside it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on the left side
4. thereof. So I answered and spake unto the angel that talked with me, saying, what are these
5. my Lord? And the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, knowest thou not what these be? And I said, no my Lord.

* The printed Hebrew copies read, "And he said:" but the reading adopted here by our English translators, and by all critics is supported by the Keri, by the majority of ancient manuscripts, and by the ancient versions, that is to say, it is beyond all question the true reading.

† In thus rendering the Hebrew words שבע שבע I have taken the *vav* in a distributive sense, making it divide the lamps of the candlestick into a pair of sevens, in conformity with the idiom of the Hebrew language. See the examples cited by Tympius in his annotation on Noldius de particulis, No. 902. In Genesis, vii. 2, 3, we find the number fourteen distributed in this manner, but without the *Vau*; "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee seven, seven, and of fowls seven, seven," which are distributed, seven to each of the sexes, as it is expressed, "the male and his female." In 1 Kings, viii. 65, we have an instance exactly in point; fourteen days are there distributed into a pair of sevens, and that with the *Vau*: "And Solomon held a great feast and all Israel with him, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days." And in order, as it should seem, to fix the attention of the reader on this distribution, it is said in the following verse, that "on the eighth day he sent the people

It appears from the tenth verse, that the stone sculptured with seven eyes was yet present : consequently this part of the vision is a continuation of the latter part of the former, not passing on to other times or to a different dispensation, but intended only to explain what had been before exhibited, by presenting it to view under other emblems of a grander description, of more extensive application, or of more striking significancy.

away ;” though it must certainly mean the fifteenth day, the eighth day of the second septenary, that is to say, the day after its close. In 2 Chronicles, vii, the same festival is recorded ; and in verse 9, we are informed, that the distribution was made into seven days for the feast of dedication and seven more for the feast of tabernacles. Accordingly here the fourteen lamps are distributed into seven and seven ; seven for one side and seven for the other side of the candlestick. I may also cite the authority of our English translators for rendering the Vau in a distributive sense ; but I can concur with them no farther, for they have rendered the words by a construction so difficult and perplexed, that no example of a like one can be produced ; nor will any one, I suppose, adhere to it, if a tolerable meaning can be made out in an easier way. This is what I have attempted. Dr. Blaney also has removed this grammatical difficulty, by disjoining the pronominal affix ך from the preposition ׀ and annexing it, as the emphatic article, to the following word ; whence he produces the following rendering ; “ Over the seven (lamps) also seven pipes.” But this mode of connecting one clause of a sentence with another, by Vau in the middle of the latter, is certainly very unusual ; and the construction is farther liable to objection, as it throws great difficulties in the way of attaining to a clear conception of the symbol, as will be shewn at length in the commentary. I feel therefore no scruple in proposing the new rendering and the new division of the sentence given above, the advantages of which will afterwards appear.

The principal object that met the eyes of Zechariah, was a candelabrum, a candlestick or lamp-bearer, entirely of gold, consisting of a tall upright shaft, surmounted by a bowl, and of a number of branches, each of which supported a lamp, springing out of it, as boughs from the trunk of a tree, not however indiscriminately or all round, but only on two sides, each being opposite to each. A candlestick of like form was placed in the tabernacle of Moses and temple of Solomon, having "six branches* going out of the sides thereof; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side thereof and three

* Exodus, xxv. 32, and following, xxxvii. 17, and following. In Solomon's temple there were ten candlesticks, as appears from 1 Kings, vii. 49, 2 Chronicles, iv. 7. But Josephus, in Antiq. Jud. b. 8, cap. 3, § 7, tells us, that although Solomon made a vast number of candlesticks, *μυριας*, according to the commandment of Moses, yet that he dedicated one only for the holy place, *ἐξ ὧν μίαν ἀνέθηκεν ὑς τὸν ναόν*, that it might be lighted every day agreeably to the law. Abijah, king of Judah, also, in 2 Chronicles, xiii. 11, where he is extolling the fidelity and piety of his own subjects, in opposition to the idolatry of the Israelites, and particularizing the instances in which they kept the charge of the Lord, mentions the candlestick and its lamps, as one only. Perhaps the disagreement may best be reconciled by supposing, that though ten candlesticks were placed in the sanctuary, one only was lighted. At any rate it is plain, that the ten were regarded, as being only one in point of use and signification; so that the increase of number had not, and was not intended to have, any other effect, than to augment the grandeur of the sanctuary. In like manner and to the same end, several other utensils, which were single in the tabernacle, were ten in the temple. 2 Chronicles, iv. 6, 8.

branches of the candlestick out of the other side thereof: " and on each of these was a lamp, with a central one on the summit of the shaft.

Zechariah, having noticed and described the objects before him, inquired the meaning of the mystic imagery, "what are these my Lord?" that is, what are they intended to represent? for what they actually were, he plainly saw. The reply is made by another question, reproving the prophet for his ignorance in much the same terms, as those, in which our Lord rebuked Nicodemus upon a like occasion. "Knowest thou not what these be?" as if it were a reproach and shame to him to be slow of heart in the apprehension of such intelligible symbols. And truly it was to be expected, that Zechariah, a master in Israel, a priest and a prophet, studious of scripture, familiar with types, versed in prophetic language, and with a mind illuminated by the preceding emblems; should readily have penetrated the veil of a figure, which had been familiar to the Jews from the time of Moses. The leniency of the angel's rebuke, under such circumstances, would be as remarkable, as the dulness of the prophet, if we did not collect from Zechariah's words, as he enumerates the objects presented to his view, that not only was the emblem attended by some extraordinary accompa-

niments, but that in its parts and make it differed widely from the candlesticks, that were placed in the tabernacle and temple.

In the first place he remarked a bowl or basin on the top of the candlestick, meaning the top of the shaft*, intended to contain oil for the nourishment of the lights of the lamps. It is not indeed expressly stated here, that the bowl was intended to answer this purpose. But since it is not easy to devise any other, and this is very obvious, it may fairly be presumed, that Zechariah would immediately perceive it. From the eleventh and twelfth verses it certainly appears, that such was the use of the bowl; yet what is said there is designed, not so much to explain its use, as to shew the nature of the oil, with which it was filled, and the sources and the means of its supply. The very existence and position of the bowl with its pipes is deemed sufficient to declare the purpose, which it was intended to answer. This bowl was the first particular which attracted and arrested the attention of the prophet; and this it did so the more forcibly, because the golden candlesticks in the tabernacle and temple had no such vessel and because it filled the place, which in them was occupied by the central lamp.

* In like manner the candlestick is put for the shaft only in Exodus, xxxvii. 20.

It is expressly noticed to be on the top of the candlestick, at once marking the surprise of Zechariah at the circumstance and directing the observation of the reader to that circumstance, that the shaft was not surmounted by a lamp, but by a golden bowl.

Having mentioned the bowl, the prophet proceeds, as if he were describing an object well known and familiar to him, "and its seven lamps;" for this use of the possessive pronoun plainly indicates his recognition of the emblem and his assured expectation that it would be found to bear that exact number of lamps, as being proper and essential parts of it. But as he went on speaking, he observed with increased surprise, that the number of lamps was greater than seven, was even double. He therefore immediately corrected his error, respecting the number, "seven and seven!" I do not pretend to assert, that this was certainly the process, which took place in Zechariah's mind. His expressions may also be accounted for by supposing, that he at first spake of the number of lamps, as being seven only, in order to shew what it ought regularly to have been, or what he expected it would have been, thus hinting to us one principal reason of his inability to comprehend the meaning of the symbol.

Our English translators however have not permitted any marks to appear in their version of this departure of Zechariah's candlestick, in respect to the number of its lamps, from the original standard; having so rendered the words "seven and seven," as if the prophet intended to distribute the seven pipes afterwards mentioned, one to each of the lamps; "and seven pipes to the seven lamps." The construction, out of which this rendering arises, is, as every reader of the original perceives, greatly embarrassed and perplexed. But without dwelling upon that objection, it is sufficient to ask; if the number of the lamps be determined to be seven, how can they be arranged in an even, regular, becoming manner, when the bowl is set, as the prophet describes it to be, on the summit of the shaft? Nobody will imagine, that they were placed unevenly, three on one side and four on the other. Neither can the central lamp be supposed to have been elevated by means of some curvilinear support above the bowl, because then it could not have been fed by the oil, and that lamp at least, if not the whole row of lamps with it, would have been raised above the bowl, which seems hardly to accord with the prophet's description. Nor on the other hand can the bowl be conceived to be raised by curved

golden rods issuing from the shaft, above the central lamp; because it would then be immediately over the flame of the lamp, and because also it would not then be fixed, as the prophet describes, on the top of the shaft. Neither could the lamp have been seated immediately in the centre of the bowl, making the general reservoir serve for its own peculiar oil-dish; for then it could not have needed or even admitted of a pipe, like those belonging to the other lamps, to communicate oil from the bowl; whence it is evident that the number of pipes, instead of being seven, according to the translation, would have been only six. Moreover in that case the central lamp would have been distinguished from the rest by a very important peculiarity, of which no trace appears in the original material candlestick; and from that the form of the visionary one must be presumed not to have departed, except where such departure is particularly noticed. Nor lastly could the lamp have been seen supported by a seventh branch shooting out from the shaft, so as to place it at right angles to the general line of lamps, because not only would that have destroyed the symmetry of the figure, but the lamp instead of giving light, would have been imperceptible from the opposite side, and would have

cast the shadow of the bowl thereon: and what perhaps is worse still, one of the oil gutters afterwards mentioned, in order to reach the bowl, must have passed immediately over the flame of the lamp.

Another particular of this candlestick, which had no place in those before known to Zechariah, was the line of pipes, which conveyed the oil from the bowl to the lamps. These, according to our English and the other versions, were seven; but of one of them it is impossible to conceive the position, till that of the central lamp shall have been previously determined; and we have seen the difficulty of doing that. Dr. Blaney's rendering, although it avoids the embarrassed construction of our authorized translation, yet presents an additional difficulty in the way to a clear and satisfactory conception of the figure exhibited; "over the seven lamps also seven pipes, one to each of the lamps, which are upon the top thereof." For by this description we are obliged to suppose, that each of the seven pipes proceeded separately from the bowl, immediately communicating between it and its proper lamp. Now leaving the central lamp out of consideration, on account of the difficulty of finding a place for it, we perceive that the pipes in passing from the bowl must have made three different

curves on each side, and all the three must have passed over the nearest, two over the second and one over the third lamp. Nothing surely can be conceived more awkwardly complicated in appearance, than a figure so constructed; and what is more, unless we suppose what the description affords us no ground for supposing, the pipes must have been utterly useless as a contrivance for supplying oil to the lamps. For we must figure to ourselves the bowl elevated on the shaft far above the level of the row of lamps; because if the bowl were in a line with them, the pipes, in order to avoid their flames, must have risen in curves of such a height, that by the law of gravity the oil could not have flowed through them. But such an elevation of the bowl is totally unwarranted by the prophet's description, and therefore the supposition of it cannot be admitted. For where the difference is not specifically stated, the candlestick of the vision must be conceived to have resembled the candlestick described by Moses. Now in that the central lamp was in a line with the other lamps; and consequently the bowl, which is here described to occupy the place of that lamp, must not be imagined to have been raised above them.

It is nothing to say that this candlestick, the subject of a vision, ought not to be reduced to

the standard of things actually existing. In poetry actual existence must give the law to imagination, according to the well-known precept of Horace; and the subjects represented in visions, except were they are particularly distinguished, as departing from the common course of things, must be supposed agreeable thereto; not encumbered with palpable incongruities and impossibilities. As we cannot suppose a living creature in a vision moving or speaking without organs of speech or of motion, or a liquid to be conveyed in a manner contrary to the laws of nature; so neither can we suppose the candlestick in this vision to be different from that described by Moses in any particular, where the difference is not specified. For the description given by Moses of the sacred utensils is the law to the figure of those utensils, as the law of nature is to the form of physical subjects.

In short let any one, whether he adopt Dr. Blaney's rendering, or that of our authorized English translation, or that of any other version, attempt to delineate a candlestick with seven lamps and seven pipes to the lamps, and he will see, that if he would avoid the extreme of clumsiness and incongruity, he must do violence either to the prophet's description or to the known form of the sacred utensil. The success of such an

attempt may be estimated by that of Don Calmet, who, in his dictionary, has given us a delineation of Zechariah's candlestick according to his own notion of it. In that the bowl so far from being placed on the top of the shaft, is elevated on the seven pipes that convey the oil to the lamps, not only high above, but on one side, so as to threaten by its weight, added to that of the oil conductors and of the fluid itself, to overturn the whole apparatus. It is necessary only to inspect the figure, in order to be convinced, that no such thing could have been presented to the eyes or have entered the mind of the prophet. But there is no need to enlarge on the defects of its construction, since the objection is fatal, that it cannot be made to consist with the prophet's express assertion, that the bowl was on the top of the candlestick. Such are the difficulties, to speak of them by the gentlest term, which attend an adherence to any of the translations, that have hitherto been given of this passage.

But if a figure be drawn of a candlestick according to the version above proposed, every thing will be found simple, orderly, and agreeable to the description given by Moses, where Zechariah himself has not expressly stated the deviation. The candlestick will appear with fourteen lamps placed at the extremities of as

many branches growing out of the shaft, as described by Moses, and divided into "seven and seven," one septenary to each side of the shaft. The bowl of oil will be set on the summit of the shaft, in strict conformity with the prophet's description, communicating its contents by pipes issuing from it to the lamps on both sides. The number of pipes indeed is not specified by Zechariah; but they may be considered either as two, or as fourteen, according as they are referred to the bowl or to the lamps. With respect to the bowl they must necessarily be two, proceeding from the two opposite sides thereof in the direction of the lamps, while in regard to the latter they may be called fourteen, because passing into all the seven lamps on each side, they may be taken, as furnishing a separate pipe to every one. The two olive-trees also, being stationed on the flat sides of the candlestick, will shed their oil very conveniently into the oil spouts or gutters afterwards described, without overhanging or in any manner intercepting the light of the lamps. Moreover the surprise of Zechariah and his inability to apprehend the signification of the candlestick with its double number of lamps, will be sufficiently accounted for; at the same time that he must be confessed, to have deserved the gentle reproof of the angel, for that he, a

prophet, with the books of the preceding prophets fixed in his memory, enforced and interpreted by what he had seen and heard in the course of the present vision, had not better understood the purport of the prophetic imagery. But "slowness of heart to believe and apply all that the prophets have spoken," is a failing not confined to Zechariah or to his nation. Even we, who hear the angel's explanation and have other and far greater advantages than Zechariah, find some difficulty in attaining to a full comprehension of it.

Light in general is the emblem of excellence, discerned, acknowledged, and admired by the world. A proper or material lamp is an instrument formed to yield an artificial light, which being sustained by oil, is really nothing but oil kindled into flame. When a lamp is taken for the emblem of spiritual and intellectual excellency, truth must be its oil, the pabulum of its light, which in reality is nothing else but truth displayed, shewing itself to the world. Accordingly the oil, which is the food of the symbolical lamp set before us in this part of Zechariah's vision, is truth, yet not every or any kind of truth, but divine and moral, religious or saving truth; that which is revealed in scripture, concerning God, his nature and attributes, his

works and will; concerning man, his origin, first estate, and present condition; concerning God's dealings with him and purposes towards him, with his relations and duties to God and his fellow creatures, his prospects and hopes. When the truth upon these important subjects is received, believed, and retained by any man, he has then the mystic oil in himself; and when that oil is kindled into flame, when the truth is well understood, duly consulted, and constantly attended to, so as to become a principal of action, vigorous, effective, and universal, then not only is he internally enlightened, possessing a spiritual discernment, seeing and estimating things, as they actually are, in their real relations, and at their real value, but he conducts himself accordingly; he is assimilated to the divine pattern, which truth sets before him; he becomes truly good and holy, and actually pursues the way to real comfort, joy, and happiness.

It is the property of light to diffuse itself upon all objects within its reach. Accordingly he, that hath in himself this spiritual light, who acts and lives according to the truth, makes it shine before men; he gives light to the world. Thus our blessed Lord says of John the baptist, that "he was a burning and a shining light*;"

* John, v. 35.

and Solomon also declares, that "the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*." This is brought about in three ways: First, as has been already intimated, by good works, by rectitude of conduct, that is to say, by a course of holy practice corresponding to the doctrines of truth and conformable to the duties of man towards God, his brethren, and himself: Secondly, by the instruction and advice, which a man thus enlightened is able, and of course willing, to dispense to those, who are destitute of, or deficient in the spiritual oil; who have not the knowledge, or not sufficient knowledge of the truth, yet are looking for it and willing to receive it: Thirdly, in the serious, solemn, and pious performance of those duties especially, which consist in the public celebration of the worship of God, according to rites, forms, and ceremonies, either instituted by himself or wisely consecrated to his honour, and solemnized by persons duly ordained to those sacred ends.

Darkness is the contrary to light. It is the emblem of falsehood. When that is admitted and entertained by the mind in the place of truth under the supposition of its being truth, it bewilders the understanding, so that things appear

* Proverbs, iv. 18.

other than as they are, in false relations, and either exaggerated or depressed beyond their real value. The consequence of this is ignorance of God and the nature of his dispensations, desertion or misapplication and corruption of religious ordinances, error of conduct, impurity of heart, and universally sin, and a corrupt evil conscience; the consequences of which are disquietude, sorrow, misery. In this state, the world, while unredeemed and unreformed, is represented by the scriptures as lying.

A proper or material candlestick is an instrument intended and constructed to bear a lamp, or many lamps, for the purpose of giving light. A symbolical or spiritual candlestick, such as is here described, with many branches and lamps, represents a body or assemblage of persons, enlightened and shining as before mentioned, collected and constituted into a regular society, for the purpose of dissipating and chasing away the spiritual darkness of a world lying in sin, enveloped in ignorance, error, and misery. Such a society is the church, which alone containing in itself the principles of saving truth, of holiness, of solid comfort and everlasting happiness, is the instrument constructed and appointed by God to hold forth the light, which may guide the steps of men into the way of peace. Every

true member of it is luminous, at once enlightened and enlightening; so speaking and so living as to shew forth to others the light that is in himself. So St. Paul speaks of christians, as placed in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, "among whom they shine as lights, or light-bearers, in the world*."

But not only is the symbol of a candlestick proper and well adapted in itself to represent the church of God; the church is actually represented by it in other parts of scripture. It is compared to a lamp lighted and set on a stand or candlestick by our blessed Lord himself, in no less than four different passages of the gospels†. This repetition shews, how apt the comparison appeared to him. "Ye," said he "are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and set it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, and it shineth to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

To any one, who considers, that often only very slight marks of citation, and sometimes none at all, attend the references made in the

* Φωστῆρες. Philippians, ii. 15.

† Matthew, v. 14, 15, 16. Mark, iv. 21. Luke, viii. 16, xi. 33.

new testament to the old, in consequence of the familiar acquaintance, which the Jews had, or were supposed to have, with their inspired scriptures, it can hardly be a matter of doubt, that our saviour here alludes to the candlestick, which stood in the tabernacle and temple, as before mentioned. But whether in making this allusion, he supposed his hearers to be already informed, as to its spiritual signification, or knowing the contrary, he intended then for the first time to hint at the true meaning of the symbol, it is difficult to determine. In either case however, by that allusion he prepared the way for that interpretation, which the beloved disciple received of the seven candlesticks in the vision of the Apocalypse. "The seven candlesticks," said the Lord, "are the seven churches." We have therefore divine authority for maintaining, that a candlestick is the symbol of a church.

Since then a candlestick in general is the scriptural symbol of a church, a candlestick with seven branches and lamps must be the symbol of the universal church, spread abroad through all its numerous particular congregations, each one in its proper allotted station, shining and giving light to the world. For the number seven being used in scripture to denote not merely an indefinite multitude, but totality and

perfection, the seven lamps are well calculated to denote all the various and dispersed congregations of the great spiritual body, at the same time that being fixed on branches proceeding from one shaft, they plainly imply, that all those congregations are united in the one body of the universal church. In this character the church began to shew itself, when the children of Israel, grown into a numerous people, were first collected and incorporated into a regularly formed body of believers in the true God, obeying, serving, and worshipping him according to his known will; and yet more conspicuously, when they were planted in the land of Canaan and spread over it, presenting to view many congregations of religious persons, spiritually united in one general community. The unity thereof was sufficiently guarded by the unity of the tabernacle, and afterwards of the temple in "the place, which God had chosen to put his name there." At the same time, there were doubtless many synagogues scattered over the whole country, somewhat in the nature of our parish churches, wherein the several congregations met to celebrate divine worship and receive religious instruction. The necessity of the case and the obligation of religiously observing the sabbath, afford sufficient grounds for believing, that such synagogues

existed in the most ancient times of the Jewish commonwealth and monarchy; although it must be acknowledged, that we find little mention made of them in the old testament, except they were included in the number of those high places, which are often mentioned without any disapprobation. But in Psalm, lxxiv. 8, where the sacred author laments the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple by the Babylonians, he particularly records the burning of the synagogues*. "They have burnt up all the synagogues of God in the land;" where the word plainly signifies such religious edifices, as under

* Prideaux (Connection, p. 1, b. 6) acknowledges that by the word, *מִקְדָּשׁ*, "must be understood the places where the people did assemble to worship God;" but he thinks that such were not properly synagogues, which were covered houses, but "proseuchæ, or open courts;" that is to say, bare walls. But it is difficult to understand how the word, *מִקְדָּשׁ*, burnt up, could be applied to such structures. Vitringa, de Synagog. vet. tom. 1, p. 403, thinks, that it means all those places, where God had formerly met with the patriarchs, and where some monuments or memorials of those divine appearances had been erected. Not having Vitringa's book by me, I have cited from Parkhurst's Heb. Lex. in v. *מִקְדָּשׁ*. But his exposition ill agrees with the signification of the word. Michaelis, in his Supp. ad Lex. Heb. No. 1009, supposes that it may denote "chapels erected in such places or also the schools of the prophets." The former would be little different from synagogues, and the latter could hardly be called "synagogues of God." That by the word, synagogues, are meant synagogues properly so called, is satisfactorily proved by Lightfoot, in his Works, vol. 1, p. 608; and Rosenmuller approves of it as the most simple interpretation. Scholia in loc.

the same name are so frequently mentioned in the new testament. Hence we may reasonably presume, that they are to be understood by the high places before noticed.

The Jewish church still more completely answered to this symbol, on the return from the Babylonian captivity, when in almost all cities, towns, and populous villages, synagogues were erected and numerous congregations assembled, professing the belief, service, and worship of the true God, reading, teaching, preaching, and hearing his holy word; and that not within the narrow bounds of Palestine only; but through almost every part of the civilized world. But doubtless the real, proper, perfect antitype of the candlestick is to be found in the christian church, when the gospel was published and its light diffused among all the nations of the world, illuminating its dark corners with the knowledge of truth and salvation.

The image however, exhibited to St. John, in his Revelation, was different from the candlestick in the temple, as well as from that in Zechariah's vision, not only as to the number of candlesticks, but as to the number of lamps in each; for it should seem, that each of those seven candlesticks supported only a single lamp or light. This is not indeed directly asserted in

the description; but there was no need for such an assertion. For the name or idea of a candlestick does not necessarily or properly express or imply the presence of any more, than a single light or lamp. Consequently, if it be formed to bear a number, either that should be stated generally, or the number should be exactly specified, as the case may require. If indeed the candlestick be of such a sort and make, as we already are, or may reasonably be presumed to be, acquainted with, it is unnecessary to distinguish the number of lamps, because the previous acquaintance answers every purpose, that could be effected by description. But when silence is observed on that point, and no previous acquaintance can be fairly presumed, we have no right to suppose, that it is the bearer of more than one. Now if in the first scene of St. John's vision only a single candlestick, or if even ten candlesticks had been mentioned, though without farther description, we should be bound to conclude, that such were seen by the apostle bearing seven lights apiece, because such was the number and such the form of those, with which the Jews were acquainted, as having stood in the tabernacle and temple: But the number of candlesticks seen by St. John being seven, that important difference cuts off all argument from

the one to the other ; and since the number of lights in the seven is not specified, we have no right to presume, that they supported more than one light apiece.

To discover the reason of this difference is happily a work of less difficulty than importance. The number seven, as before mentioned, is the number of totality and perfection ; and consequently the seven churches, represented by the seven candlesticks, stand for the whole catholic church of Christ ; being the same subject, as was signified by the candlesticks of Moses and Solomon, transferred to the times of the gospel. But they represented the church in a state of unity, altogether the object of the divine election and blessing ; whereas the seven candlesticks, bearing each a single light, represent it in a state of division. They exhibit it taken, as it were, to pieces, analyzed and resolved into its constituent parts, and those unequally sharing in the approbation and favour of the Lord.

If this interpretation of the seven candlesticks be found upon examination to tally with the contents of the epistles directed to the seven churches, there can be little or no doubt both that it is the true one, and that the seven candlesticks were seen by St. John, as above described, with one lamp apiece. Now from the especial application

of those epistles to the seven churches particularly named, we plainly collect it to have been the intention of the Holy Ghost, to represent the whole church as separated into its component parts and completely subjected, not more in its universality, than in every one of its divisions and members, to the controul of Christ, who imparts or denies the protection of his providence and the gifts of his grace to each congregation and to each individual, "severally as he will." For not only are these seven epistles severally directed to the seven churches, but a most affectionate and lively interest in their respective welfare is manifested in each; the perpetual and watchful oversight of their supreme head, with his absolute power and authority over them, is asserted in very magnificent and awful language; the actual spiritual state of each is particularly described; warning or encouragement, approbation or censure are awarded accordingly; and a blessing is promised or a punishment threatened to each respectively, as they may persist in evil ways or maintain a "patient continuance in well-doing." When all this is taken together with the following part of the revelation, to which the seven epistles form a sort of introductory chapter, it can hardly be denied, that in those epistles the church is considered as separated

into its constituent members, agreeably to the interpretation above given of the seven candlesticks.

At the same time let it be noticed once more, that the number seven, signifying totality and perfection, the seven churches are the representatives of all the congregations of believers wheresoever dispersed over the world. This also appears from the close of every epistle, which having been addressed to one church separately, concludes with a solemn admonition directed universally to "every one that hath an ear."

And now having found the analytical signification of St. John's seven candlesticks, we may briefly apply the synthetical method to determine the signification of those in the tabernacle and temple. For since the seven candlesticks, each with one light, represent the multitude of the congregations of the universal church separately taken, if it were desired to represent those congregations in their unity, how could it be done better, than by an orderly combination of seven lamps in one candlestick? But this is the very figure, by which the whole church of Israel was represented in the tabernacle and temple, and which beyond all controversy was equally adapted to represent it, when it became christian.

Hence we may easily attain to the signification of the candlestick before us. For since the Gentile church was upon every account entitled to be represented by a like type as the Jewish, consequently the two great divisions of the church would be properly and sufficiently represented by two candlesticks of seven branches and seven lights each. But we are well assured, both from the general tenor of the new testament and from many particular texts, that the Israelitish and Gentile churches have been made one, being united by the chief corner stone Jesus Christ. If then it were desired to represent them in that state of union, having at the same time regard to their origin respectively, what symbol could be so apt and so consistent with scriptural doctrines and imagery, as that of a candlestick, bearing fourteen lamps on as many branches issuing in two septenaries from its two opposite sides? But such exactly was the candlestick exhibited in vision to Zechariah; and such an emblem, so interpreted, is altogether agreeable to the design and purport of this part of the vision, which is to follow up the fourth part, by a representation of subjects according to the order of time and the nature of things. In that the foundation stone of the church was produced; and the iniquity of the land, wherein it should

be laid, was declared to be done away at once and for ever. It is therefore not only consistent with, but almost indispensably necessary to the orderly progress of the vision, that we should find in this part an emblem of the church itself compounded, as it is, of two great and, as it might have been thought, inharmonious divisions, yet reared and built up in the unity of a common faith and common rule of practice, of common rites and ordinances, of a common Lord and common God and Father, present to every member of the same by the communion of one spirit.

But what will greatly recommend both the rendering above given and the interpretation of the figure consequent upon it, is the consideration, that we are thereby supplied with a very easy and satisfactory vindication and explanation of the text in the eleventh chapter of the Revelation of St. John, in which the apostolic prophet speaks of "two candlesticks and two olive-trees," as emblems eminently conspicuous in some well known passage of scripture. Now no other passage, but that before us, is pointed out, to which St. John can be supposed to refer; and it must be confessed, that this, as it appears in the received versions, does not bear out the terms, in which the reference is made, without such allowances and apologies, as it is not very

pleasant to be under the necessity of making. But by the new rendering both the difficulty and the distress are effectually removed. The candlestick of fourteen branches with their lamps, being double in its form and compound in its signification, may be well described as two candlesticks, in perfect conformity with the truth in point of fact, and with very little deviation from propriety of speech, even in its greatest strictness, and with none at all, considering the latitude justly claimed for figurative and prophetic language. In Romans, xi, St. Paul presents us with a case quite in point. The apostle first speaks of the catholic church under the figure of an olive-tree, and then speaks of that olive-tree as two-fold, consisting of the original, or as he terms it, the "natural olive," the Jewish church, and of the "wild olive," the Gentile church engrafted thereon. A writer having this passage in mind might without impropriety, certainly without falsehood, refer to the two olive-trees in the epistle to the Romans.

Before taking leave of the general subject of the candlestick, it is justly due to the memory of the learned Campegius Vitringa to state, that the propriety, with which a golden candlestick, whether of seven or of twice seven branches and lights, is given as a figure of the church is

excellently illustrated in a part of the valuable fragment of his intended commentary on the fourth chapter of Zechariah, which I will here insert, though at the expense of the regret it will occasion to the reader, that the illustrious author did not live to supersede the present attempt, by the accomplishment of his undertaking. "When," says he, "I look attentively into the subject, I soon perceive the greatest conformity between a candlestick and the church. A candlestick, such as we meet with here, supported on its base, divided into seven branches or stalks, growing out of the shaft, holding forth seven lamps really and actually shining, not only may, but must, signify some body of rational subjects, which in a mystical sense may be said to shine and to illuminate others; and that by means of oil, communicated to them by the Holy Ghost. Now since such a society cannot be looked for, except among men; and among men cannot be found, except in the church, which in its whole body exhibits men by faith, wisdom, holiness, shining themselves and illuminating others, it cannot be doubted that a candlestick forms a most beautiful emblem of the church. Accordingly I affirm that there is no other thing in the world in which all the attributes concur*."

* Comment. in Zechariam, p. 268. In what has preceded, and in a small portion of what is to follow, of the

Let us now proceed to investigate the signification of the candlestick yet more closely, first as to its material, and next as to its several parts.

The candlestick is described to be all of gold, in all its parts and appendages. The attributes of the church therefore must bear some analogy to the properties of that metal. Now gold is solid and weighty, pure, shining with a high polish, and of all metals the most excellent and precious. So is the church a matter of the greatest weight, of the utmost importance, to mankind; and it is solid, as being firmly erected on the divine power of Christ and having his promise of eternal durability. It is also pure from all falsehood in doctrine, being led into all the truth by Him, who is the very truth; and clean from every stain of sin, being washed from every pollution in the blood of its founder Jesus Christ. It also shines by the reflection of its divine author's excellency, even to the enlightening of the hidden corners of this dark world, as we have before seen; and it is beyond all

commentary on this part of the vision, I am more or less indebted to the fragment, which that learned author has left. I wish this general acknowledgment to be taken instead of frequent references; especially as I am sometimes indebted to him for a hint, which could not well be made the subject of a reference.

compare the most excellent and precious thing existing on this globe of earth, in the sight both of God and man; as God has declared in many places of his holy word, and as many men have shewn, by spending their lives in its service and by laying them down for its sake.

It is remarkable that in his description of the candlestick Zechariah has omitted all mention of its foot or base. It is also remarkable that Moses takes no notice of any kind of stand, as forming a part of the candlestick made for the tabernacle, either in Exodus, xxv, or xxxvii, although he enumerates and describes the other parts with strict minuteness. Yet it cannot be imagined that the candlestick in the tabernacle was without a foot, which is a necessary and essential part of a candlestick, especially when like that, of large dimensions and spreading out into many branches. Besides the tabernacle itself was moveable with all its furniture, yet no mention is made of any tenon with a corresponding socket or mortise, by means of which the candlestick could be fixed in the floor and taken up again, when occasion might require, as there must have been, if it had no foot. Since then it is unreasonable to suppose, that Moses's candlestick was destitute of a foot or stand, merely because no mention is made of such a thing, it is to be presumed,

that Zechariah's also was not seen, for the visionary must answer to the real one, without a sufficient base for its support, though the prophet has not given us any description of it. Thus the omission is sufficiently accounted for by the necessity of the thing; which rendered all mention superfluous, unless it had been distinguished, as does not seem to have been the case, by some important peculiarity in its material or its form. This is moreover entirely agreeable to analogy; for we do not find, that any thing is here said of the light of the lamps, though it cannot be questioned, that they were seen lighted up. Otherwise, both the candlestick would have appeared in an inactive, useless state, which cannot be supposed; and the bowl must have overflowed by the continual influx of oil afterwards described to be poured into it. In like manner we found above, that St. John has not specified the single lamps of his seven candlesticks, because there must of necessity have been one, and we have no warrant for supposing that there were more; and so we may observe, that in the books of Kings and Chronicles the number of lamps in Solomon's ten candlesticks is not mentioned, because there is no reason to doubt, that they were made after the pattern of that in the tabernacle; whereas in Zechariah's

the number is particularly specified, because it was different in that respect, from the preceding patterns. The bowl likewise not being a necessary or usual part of a sacred candlestick, but an adjunct peculiar to this, its presence could not be ascertained or inferred from the bare mention of a candlestick; and therefore it is noticed, as well as the fourteen lamps, emphatically and with a note, as it were, of admiration.

Since then this candlestick was certainly seen by Zechariah with some sort of base or foot, we may be allowed to enquire what that was intended to typify. Now as the base or foot of a candlestick is that on which it stands, so it must here be designed to represent that, on which the church stands, or the foundation of the church. But it has been abundantly shewn in the commentary on the ninth verse of the third chapter, that the foundation of the church is no other than our Lord Jesus Christ, so often described as such in scripture. The base of the candlestick is consequently the same thing as the stone with seven eyes; and since that was still present in this part of the vision, we hence gather another highly probable reason for Zechariah's silence in respect to the former, inasmuch as it represented that which was already present under another emblem.

The shaft of a candlestick springs up immediately from the base, and is in reality nothing more than the elongation or elevation of it. The subject therefore signified by it cannot differ essentially from that typified by the base, as it does not here, except in point of relation. In the one, Christ is represented as the foundation of the church, while in the other, he appears as the principle of spiritual vitality to all its congregations and members, as "the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment, ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."

This is clearly and fully represented by the branches of the candlestick growing out of the shaft, intimating at once the closest union and the most absolute dependence, in exact correspondence with that other figure, under which the Lord is pleased to represent himself as the trunk of the spiritual vine and his disciples as the branches. Conformably to that representation, he is described by St. Paul, as the first-born of the spiritual creation of God; the first-born among many brethren; by whom christians have their adoption and are made the children of God. He is their prince and king, in whom they are enrolled and reckoned as citizens and subjects of that happy city and kingdom,

where God reigneth. He is the owner and master of the house into which they are admitted and made the family of the most high. On him, in short, their whole religious character depends, he having been made unto them justification, sanctification, and redemption.

The farther consideration of the bowl, with the pipes, and the oil must be postponed till the olive-trees are introduced again with their appendages toward the close of the chapter.

We now come to the answer returned by the interpreting angel to the question of the prophet. It is put into the form of a message to Zerubabel.

6. This is the word of Jehovah unto Zerubbabel; "Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts." What art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubabel a plain. Yet will he bring forth that head-stone. Be there acclamations, grace, grace, unto it.

It must be owned, that these words are far from conveying any explicit information to Zechariah on the subject of the candlestick. Taken in connection with the angel's previous reproof of his dulness, they seem rather to contain a refusal of such information, and with the assistance of only an obscure hint and an allusion to

another prophetic figure, to refer the prophet to his own previous knowledge and farther study of the sacred scriptures, for a full explanation of the symbol before him.

“This is the word of Jehovah unto Zerubbabel.” Zerubbabel was of the royal family of David. Under his guidance and command the Jews had returned from the house of exile and bondage, he having been appointed, or at least permitted, by the king of Persia, to act as their governor*, captain, or prince. Though he seems to have been depressed in spirit by a sense of the fallen fortunes of his house and of his country, yet he was certainly a man, whose abilities, prudence, and piety, not less than his high birth, qualified him for that office; and he was the person, whose zeal and activity chiefly contributed to the rebuilding of the temple. As prince of his people, Zerubbabel was deeply interested in the mystery of the compound golden candlestick, for one half of it represented, as we

* The word מנה, which is used to express the office of Zerubbabel, is of doubtful derivation, but seems not to be of Hebrew origin. It is generally applied to one, who is governor under a supreme Lord; but whether that signification belong to it *vi originis*, or merely by use, is not ascertained. Simonis supposes that traces of it are discoverable in the Turkish Beg. The LXX render it by various words expressive both of supreme and subordinate sovereignty.

have seen, the Jewish church ; which therein was exhibited in a high state of prosperity and glory, united to its Lord, and through him, to some other body of believers and worshippers, shining with equal beauty and brilliancy. The message is therefore addressed to Zerubbabel with great propriety, force, and point.

To him and to the seniors of the returned captivity the great inferiority of the new temple to the splendid edifice of Solomon was a subject of deep regret; and it is likely that Zerubbabel especially would feel with great keenness the inadequacy of his means to erect a palace less unworthy of its glorious inhabitant. Besides, when he considered the power and the malice of his adversaries, he might even doubt the possibility of bringing even his present undertaking to a successful close. He is therefore informed by this message, that his doubts are groundless and his regret vain.

“Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts.” There is no need to be solicitous as to the exact and distinct meaning of the two words, “might and power,” since they are only intended to include all sorts of earthly means; the powers of government, riches, worldly influence, political sagacity, human wit, and learning. Of these it is denied, that they are in

any degree necessary, or by themselves able, to carry into effect the purpose of God. "Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" It is probable, that Zerubbabel connected in his mind the idea of God's church and worship too closely with that of a material and splendid temple, as if the one could not exist independently of the other. He is therefore given to understand that there is no need of wealth, power, and skill, like Solomon's, to build a temple that would meet the views and satisfy the wishes of a wise and pious man; that it was not the grandeur of an edifice or the splendour of decorations and furniture which constituted a temple, but the inhabitation of the spirit of God; that He "prefers before all temples the upright heart and pure," and condescends to accept the dedication of earthly goods to his service, only when the heart of the offerer is duly subjected to his influence. Hence Zerubbabel would learn, that the comparative meanness of the present building ought not to be to him a subject of disappointment and mortification, and that the spirit of the living God, inspiring the hearts of his faithful servants with courage, zeal, and prudence, would enable them to prosecute and complete their work, in spite of any diffi-

culties or opposition. Hence also Zechariah himself would be taught to correct any misapprehension he might have formed as to the meaning of the emblems set before him. He would collect, that they were not intended to represent the formation of a mighty temporal empire, by the junction of Jews and Gentiles, under a great earthly sovereign, but a religious community joined in the faith and worship of the true God, and enlightened, animated, supported, and governed by his holy spirit.

Here ends the word of the Lord, as recited by the interpreting angel, who proceeds to illustrate in some degree the message he has delivered, by an allusion to an image very familiar to persons versed in the writings of the prophets, and known to represent the church of Christ,

“What* art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel a plain.” The intention of the speaker plainly is, not to substitute the figure of the mountain for the candlestick, but to set

* Our authorized english version has “Who?” in conformity with the dictum of the Hebrew grammarians, that the interrogative *ma* is never used, but of a person. Yet various passages are produced, in which the contrary appears. See Buxtorf’s *Thes. Gram.* p. 392. In order to get rid of what is considered to be an anomaly, the grammarians have had recourse to various ellipses; but some of them are so harsh and improbable, that it is much better to admit the anomaly. That the interrogative is properly

them in juxta-position with each other. An example of this mode of illustrating or explaining one emblem by another we have had in the third part of the vision, where the branch is succeeded by the stone. In vindication of it, we may remark not only, that of two emblems or figures, one may be more obvious or more familiar than the other, but that each of them being but imperfectly understood, when both are at any time made to meet in one subject, there can be little doubt, that when applied separately, they are generally to be referred to the same. It may sometimes be doubted, whether the point, which an arrow strikes, be really the scope of the archer; but when two shafts meet together in the same, we are at no loss to decide that to be the mark at which they both were aimed. Thus too the emblems tend greatly to elucidate each other and exhibit the subject they represent, invested

rendered "What?" in this text, is evident from the answer, "a plain." In order to support their rendering, "Who?" our translators found themselves obliged to supply the words, "thou shalt become," for which the Hebrew text affords no authority. Dr. Blaney renders as in the commentary. But in his note, p. 18, he proposes a conjectural emendation, which affords a sufficient example, of what sort of bible we might expect to have, if learned and ingenious critics were left at liberty to indulge in what seem to them to be happy conjectures, or even to alter and amend the text on slight evidence. It is however but justice to the learned author to say, that in the close of his note he abandons his own conjecture.

with greater importance, and more amply delineated in the fulness and variety of its parts and attributes.

But the commentators on Zechariah, while they have interpreted the emblem of the candlestick to signify the christian church, have generally confined this figure to the circumstances, under which the second temple was erected; supposing the great mountain to betoken the difficulties, which presented themselves to Zerubabel's great work, especially as they arose from the despotic power of the Persian government, and the plain to denote the annihilation or total removal and disappearance of every obstacle that could thwart his undertaking. If the figure had been introduced in a former part of the vision and connected with emblems of that import, the interpretation would be probable and even satisfactory: but the christian church being confessedly the antitype of the previous and parallel emblem, we must not circumscribe our thoughts within such narrow limits as the erection of the second temple, but carry them on to the grander subject and give to the mountain an interpretation more consistent with the preceding imagery, with the evangelical scope of Zechariah's predictions, and with the signification of the figure itself in other passages of the prophecies; "The

mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it*:" and in the next words; "And many peoples shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob." Generally considered a mountain is a very suitable and striking emblem of extent, strength, elevation, and duration; but in its application to the christian church, the sacred writers have doubtless an especial regard to the situation of the temple on Mount Sion; that object of the divine choice, where the Most High dwelleth, and which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever†.

It is unnecessary, and would be tedious, to transcribe more of the passages of the old testament, in which the same well known figure is applied to the christian church; but it would be forgetful and negligent, if I were not to refer for a farther illustration of it to the symbol, which was represented to Nebuchadnezzar in his vision; the stone, which was cut out without hands, not by might nor by power, and which smote down the terrible compound image of worldly empires, and itself became a great

* Isaiah, ii. 2, Micah, iv. 1.

† Psalm, ix. 11, cxxv. 1, cxxxii. 13.

mountain and filled the whole earth. To this mountain, the apostrophe of the angelic interpreter is addressed; "What art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel a plain." In his time the great mountain of the christian church was not visible to mortal sight; it was as a mere plain; the very stone, which was appointed to grow up into it, was not yet actually projected, not even cut out. For although in the former part of the vision it had been represented, as cut out, engraved with seven eyes and set before Joshua the high-priest, yet that was done only in vision, symbolically, to the rapt sense of a prophet. To the corporeal organs and uninspired perception of Zerubbabel the stone was invisible. Existing only in the divine prescience and decree, or convolved in the germ or embryo of the Jewish church, it is here said to be as a plain, a mere level space, unbroken by any rise or swelling that could indicate the future elevation of a mighty mountain. The kingdom was not yet come.

"Yet will he bring forth" (we may either take the verb impersonally or understand Jehovah for its nominative) "that head-stone;" certainly the stone set before Joshua in the foregoing part of the vision*; the stone of Israel, the stone

* "The chief or principal stone, mentioned cap. iii. 9, denoted the Messiah, called the Branch, ver. 8, and the

engraven with seven eyes, decreed to become the great mountain. The connection of this declaration with the preceding question and answer calls to mind, as by a plain and almost inevitable reference, the before cited passage of Daniel ; and when compared with those numerous texts of the old and new testaments, in which Christ is represented as the head stone of the corner and the head of the body which is the church, fixes with decided certainty the interpretation before given to the figure of the great mountain, and affords us an eminent and beautiful instance of that correspondence and consistency, which pervading the scriptures in all their various and widely dispersed parts, mark the whole with a character of unity and prove the contrivance of that great master-builder, whose plans are gradually evolved and expanded by the hand of time into the harmony, in which his all-comprehensive intellect originally conceived and composed them.

“Be there acclamations, grace, grace, unto it.” The words, “grace, grace,” are an Hebrew form of salutation, intended to convey at the same time an expression of gratitude. The angel calls upon those, who will see the person

words before us mystically denote the same person.” Lowth’s commentary on the place.

represented by the stone, brought into the world and acting up to the dignity and greatness of his character, to salute him with loud shouts of acclaim, with songs of Jubilee and triumph, as our prophet, in his ninth chapter, exhorts them to do in a still more animated style. This was done accordingly, when Jesus rode into the holy city, in the meek pomp of a patriarchal sovereign. For although the pretended builders in Israel set at nought and rejected that elect, precious, and living stone, yet in the household of the daughter of Jerusalem, there were not wanting multitudes to cry hosanna.

8. Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

The following words are plainly distinguished from the foregoing, as proceeding from a different speaker. The interpreting angel, after reciting the divine word to Zérubbabel, had himself predicted the wide extension and firm establishment of the church, founded on the Lord Jesus Christ and increased into a great mountain. Now the Lord himself*, that is to say, the angel of Jehovah, to whom we have before found the incommunicable name applied, takes up the parable.

* Archbishop Newcome observes, the voice of Jehovah was immediately addressed to the prophet.

9. The hands of Zerubbabel have founded this house; his hands shall also finish it: and thou shalt know, that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? But rejoice ye and consider that stone. He hath divided into the hand of Zerubbabel those seven. The eyes of Jehovah are they, running to and fro in all the earth.

The declaration, that the temple lately founded, shall, in spite of all opposition and of the paucity of means, be brought to completion, is plain, direct, and emphatic. As surely as Zerubbabel hath laid the foundations of the fabric, so surely shall he complete it. The prediction was fulfilled accordingly; for we read that "the house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king*." But the prediction does not terminate there. The main scope and intention of it is by its divine author expressly declared to be, that its speedy accomplishment may stand for a present external and visible sign and pledge of the reality and certainty of the future events represented by the foregoing imagery.

"And thou shalt know, that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you." Thou shalt know, that

* Ezra, 6. 15.

thou hast not been in a mere dream of the night, or seen a vision of the fancy only ; but shalt attain to full assurance of the fact, that Jehovah the Father, hath revealed unto thee his gracious purposes in the events of futurity, under the symbols here set before thy eyes, and hath sent me to deliver in this manner, these sacred and consolatory predictions to thee and to thy brethren. Perhaps the words may be thought to imply, that some doubt existed, or might exist, in Zechariah's own mind ; but let it be considered, that what is here addressed personally to the prophet, is through him directed also to Zerubbabel, to his associates in the work, and to his countrymen in general. When they shall see the prophecy accomplished in the erection and completion of the temple, then they may be assured, that the preceding parts of it, concerning the rise, growth, extent, and prosperity of the church of God, shall be fulfilled with equal certainty and punctuality. So Dr. Blaney observes ; " By the verb in the second person singular Zechariah is addressed singly, as one, who from seeing the accomplishment of the prediction, would be convinced of the reality of the divine mission. But the angel was not sent to him alone, but to the whole body of the nation jointly with him." It must however be remarked, that by the angel in the above citation

Dr. Blaney does not mean the Angel, Jehovah, for he endeavours, as usual, in support of his hypothesis, to get rid of his mission, and accordingly ascribes the speech to the interpreting angel, though contrariwise to the express assertion of the prophet; "The word of Jehovah came unto me, saying." If instead of acquiescing in the present reading* of the Hebrew text, he had adopted and defended that, which Archbishop Newcome has received and followed in his translation, he might have maintained, that the prophet having finished his recital of the Lord's words, spoke in his own person and of himself, as sent by the Lord to deliver his oracles to the Jews; but that cannot consist with the present reading, which he justly considers to be the genuine one.

"For who hath despised the day of small things?" The word of Jehovah certainly ends with the ninth verse; and the interpreting angel here takes up and continues the subject, introducing, by the causal particle, "for," the reason

* Three manuscripts, with the Vulgate, Syriac, and Chaldee, read אלהים, which, if admitted into the text, would prove that the words are addressed not to Zechariah, but to the Jews. But the authorities are not only in themselves too slender to warrant an alteration in the text, but are met by countervailing authorities for reading אליך, unto thee, instead of אליכם, unto you, which would confine the address entirely to Zechariah.

of giving the sign and pledge so graciously afforded to the Jews by Jehovah, in the oracle above delivered; to convince them that notwithstanding the great inferiority of the new temple to the ancient edifice, it should still, according to the prophecy of Haggai, surpass the former in real, substantial glory. The words, being put in the form of a question, convey an indignant rebuke to those, who looking merely to human might and means, considered the present condition of the people of God, straggling among the ruins of their desolated city, few in number, weak and poor, as unworthy of so august an appellation, and as quenching all hope, that they would ever be able to fulfil the high destiny, which according to the prophets was prepared for them.

“But* rejoice ye, and consider, or when ye consider, that stone.” The sentence may be considered as somewhat elliptical. Do not so, do

* I have thus rendered the Vau in this place, because it is evident, that the following words oppose to the present incredulity of certain persons among the Jews the animated exhortation to rejoice, in consideration of the help, which the person represented by the stone is actually affording to Zerubbabel and his associates. This opposition plainly requires the connecting particle to be rendered by an adversative conjunction. The two verbs ought to be pointed, as being in the imperative mood. Archbishop Newcome and Dr. Blaney have given no distinct rendering of the first particle Vau.

not think contemptuously or despondingly of your present condition and present efforts; but rather rejoice ye and contemplate that stone.

"He," that is to say, the person represented by that stone, "hath divided into the hand of Zerubbabel those seven."

Our authorized version renders, "For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven." The incongruity of these words cannot fail to strike the reader. The plummet is evidently meant to be understood of a proper material plummet, nor is it easy to guess at any spiritual signification that can be annexed to it. Yet this is said to be seen, together with those spiritual subjects, "the seven eyes of the Lord," in the hand of Zerubbabel. It is also to be observed, that there is not in the original Hebrew any preposition or prefix, answering to "with" in our translation, nor any other part of speech, that can connect "the seven" with the former part of the sentence*. Therefore, if we retain the old

* Our translators have given in their margin a different rendering; "Since the seven eyes of the Lord shall rejoice," From this hint a less objectionable rendering than that in their text may be easily made out. "For who hath despised the day of small things?" [Let no one presume so to do.] "For those seven have rejoiced, when they have seen the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel. The eyes of Jehovah are they" &c. But this rendering supposes the words

translation of that part, it will be necessary to separate those two words therefrom and construe them with the following sentence. This Dr. Blaney* has done; but the consequence is, that he has been obliged to place that part of the verse by itself in a separate paragraph, where it appears with singular abruptness, as the explanation of an emblem, introduced out of its place and totally unconnected with what precedes and with what follows. In the translation above offered to the reader, the strange incongruity in our authorized version is removed; the sentence is grammatically constructed, the mention of the seven eyes naturally follows that of the stone, on which they were engraved, and then the explanation of them is properly introduced after the

האבן הבריל to be correctly rendered "the plummet;" a rendering, which will soon be shewn to be erroneous; and the sentence to be nothing but plain prose, when in reality it is poetical.

* The grammatical construction of the Hebrew, which Dr. Blaney has followed, does not appear in his rendering. It is that of the nominative absolute with a pronoun following, which is sufficiently common; but I believe the pronoun in such instances is usually found with a prefix. In his note, he supposes the seven to refer to the seven lamps of the candlesticks, which are explained to be the same as the seven fountains, which, according to Dr. Blaney's rendering of iii. 9, issue from the stone. But the mention of them, as belonging to Jehovah, intimates, that they denote subjects described under the same figure in some other part of scripture. This however is not the case with the phrase; "fountains of the Lord," which is nowhere to be met with.

mention. The poetical cast also of the passage is preserved*, which in the translations hitherto given of it is entirely destroyed.

Our learned translators inform us in their marginal reading, that the two words, rendered "the plummet" in their text, literally signify the stone of tin. Now a stone is often used in the old testament for a weight, and in a few passages for a plummet, but is never found connected with the mention of tin, either in that or in any other signification; so that if a plummet were the thing intended in the passage before us, the mention of tin was not only unnecessary, but perplexing and obstructive. But tin is thought to be here put for tin ore; and though tin itself be the lightest of metals, yet because its ore is heavier than that of any other metal, it is supposed to be peculiarly calculated for use as a plummet. Before however this can be applied as an argument to defend the rendering in our English text, it must be farther supposed, that the use of a lump of tin ore for a plummet was so common among the Jews, that the expression, a stone of tin, had passed by custom into an

* In the translation I have arranged the lines in their proper order. They form two triplets succeeded and terminated by a distich. Had the poetical form of the passage been observed, the words האבן הבריל would never have been joined in construction.

appellative for that instrument. Now it cannot be proved, and it is not at all likely, that tin ore was ever in common use for such a purpose. The Jews had no tin in their own country. What they had of that metal they got from abroad, in all probability from Britain*, and perhaps, before the Phenicians took so long a voyage, by a partial land carriage through France or Spain. But then they would be likely to receive it in a metallic state, not in that of ore; for the weight of the ore being more than forty times greater than that of the metal, the price of freight and carriage must have been proportionably augmented. Besides it is remarkable, that we, the inhabitants of the Cassiterides, do not find any such peculiar adaptation of tin ore to the purpose, of plummets, as to prevent us from commonly making use of a piece of lead.

None of the ancient versions make any mention of a plummet. Jonathan, the Chaldee paraphrast, seems to be the original author of that rendering. Having his mind entirely occupied, as was likely, by the idea of erecting the temple, and considering that a plummet is an instrument

* Bochart argues more ingeniously than convincingly for the derivation of Britain from *ברית-אנך*, *Barat-anac*, the country of tin. Phaleg. p. 649.

greatly used in building, and that a stone often signifies a weight and is used a few times in scripture for a plummet, he joined to it the next word, the true signification of which he did not see, or at least know how to apply to the passage, and so sunk the meaning of both in one common rendering, a plummet. Moreover, his paraphrase is so obscure and fanciful in the latter part, that it entirely takes away all weight from his authority. "Who is this, that despiseth this day? Because this edifice is small? Will he not change his mind and rejoice, when he shall see the plummet (or stone of the plumb-line) in the hand of Zerubbabel? Seven courses like those. Before the Lord are discovered all the doings of the children of men in all the earth." He seems desirous to interpret the seven to be seven courses or rows of stones built up, one on the other, in the walls of the temple; but seeing the impossibility of applying that interpretation to the eyes of the Lord, he flies off and contents himself with delivering a general axiom. The uncertainty and fluctuation of the author are then sufficiently conspicuous, to prevent any one from bowing to his authority. The only argument that remains in favour of the version in our English text is, that if the two Hebrew words do not signify a plummet, it is difficult

to ascribe to them any signification at all. That difficulty it is hoped will be removed, at least lessened, by the following considerations.

The stone, that well known emblem of the Messiah, was introduced with singular solemnity in the fourth part of the vision; and in this part it has been again brought forward, only three verses above, with distinguished eminence as the head-stone, that was to become the great mountain. Now can any one suppose, that when the same word occurs for the third time within a few verses and with the emphatic article prefixed, it is used without reference to its previous signification? Besides, the stone in the fourth part of the vision is described as sculptured with seven eyes, and the very next thing, which follows the mention of the stone here, is the introduction of seven subjects, as already known to the reader, which are immediately afterwards explained to be seven eyes. If then it be maintained, that the stone is not here intended to represent the same subject, as in the two former places, it must be done upon such principles, as will preclude the possibility of explaining a course of prophetic imagery, and will even introduce the greatest confusion and uncertainty into language in general.

The whole difficulty and obscurity have arisen from taking the second word as a noun substantive, and putting the former in construction with it*. But in reality that word is a verb, and a very common one, appearing in its usual form and used in its common meaning, that of dividing or separating†. Many texts may be produced,

* That construction itself involves an irregularity, the emphatic article being prefixed præter morem to the substantive in regimine. Buxtorf, in his *Thes. Gr.* p. 385, cites eight examples of this irregularity; and among them is the passage now before us. But the article is here prefixed not only to the noun in regimine, but to the second also; which duplication seems intended to mark some extraordinary emphasis laid on them. Yet, since the phrase does not occur elsewhere, and there is nothing remarkable in the use of a plummet by a builder, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to guess at the reason of such emphasis.

† The Greek, Latin, and Arabic versions concur in the marginal rendering of our English bibles; but the Syriac reads *לכאן דמרחקא*, the stone of separation; thus retaining strong traces of the true meaning of the passage. *זו הבריל* is plainly the perfect tense of the Hiphil form, and governed by the substantive or relative pronoun understood. The word *אבן*, to which the pronoun refers, is indeed of the feminine gender, whereas the verb is in the masculine form. But the enallage generis is far from being uncommon. Many examples of it may be seen in Buxtorf. *Thes. Gr.* p. 437. But the present does not depart so widely, as most of those, from strict grammatical analogy. Instead of agreeing with the emblem itself, it agrees with the person represented by it. A strong case in point is found in Eccles. i. 2, where the feminine noun *קהל* is construed with the masculine verb *אמר*, because Solomon, the person designated by that noun, had his name been expressed, would have required a verb in the masculine. The instance is cited by Buxtorf and other grammarians.

in which it is used of dividing or separating things for the purpose of consecrating them to the service of God. Thus the people of Israel are said to be separated from the nations, clean things from unclean, the Levites from their brethren*. In a like sense it is said here, that the person signified by the stone will separate those seven into the hand of Zerubbabel; that is, he will separate them from ministering to the protection, support, and prosperity of other princes and nations, to exert their high powers in behalf of Zerubbabel and the Jews alone. It is said that he will divide them into the hand of Zerubbabel, that is to say, to his use, to his benefit and advantage; to aid him in the expeditious progress and successful conclusion of his great work. Not that the absolute direction of these agents should be committed to him, to be used at his own discretion, but that they should be with him, preventing and assisting; inspiring his counsels, strengthening his hands, in all the anxiety, difficulty, and fatigue attending his first labour, that of rebuilding the temple, and in the other part of his work, by far the more arduous and doubtful, that of rearing up a fallen and dispirited assemblage of men into the

* Leviticus, xi. 47, xx. 24, xx. 26, Deut. x. 8, 1 Chron. xxv. 1, Ezra, vi. 21, viii. 24.

rank and dignity of a nation; a nation distinguished from all others, as the people of God.

“The eyes of Jehovah are they, running to and fro in all the earth.” What those seven, said to be separated into the hand of Zerubbabel, really are, is now explained by a reference, as distinct as some of those, which the sacred writers often make*, both to the ninth verse of the preceding chapter and also to some other passage of scripture, in which they are more particularly described, as “the eyes of Jehovah running to and fro in all the earth.” That passage is found in 2 Chronicles, xvi. 9, where the prophet Hanani, reproving Asa, king of Judah, for his profane reliance on Ben-hadad, reminds him of the protection and favour of the almighty in times past, and observes, that “the eyes of Jehovah run to and fro throughout the whole earth.” The intention of the spirit of prophecy in citing these words evidently is, that the two passages should be diligently compared together, and that the meaning of both should be thence

* The inspired penmen in referring to other parts of scripture, do not quote chapter and verse, as we say, but content themselves with a bare reference to the author, most frequently without naming him, sometimes to the scriptures in general, and sometimes as here, supposing the reader to be well acquainted with the sacred writings, they merely quote the words. This has been noticed before.

elicited. Many phrases, more or less similar to those, are indeed to be found in various parts of the scriptures; as that in the Psalms, "the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous;" and that in Proverbs, "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good;" but none fully answering to the above. In truth the others are only metaphors, more or less strictly kept up, denoting the omnipresence of God and his observation of what is done among men; but in these we find observation carried into actual and effective superintendence, and expressed not by metaphors merely, but by symbols typifying the agents, by whom God acts upon human affairs. For the eyes are said to run to and fro through the earth; an action which in itself is not suited to the nature of eyes, but when joined with the mention of them is well calculated to make us think of those symbols, as intended to represent vigilant, active, diligent ministers, in some manner employed continually in effecting the divine purposes upon earth. They are said to run to and fro in all the *earth*; but perhaps the words would be more truly rendered, "in all the *land*," that is to say, the land inhabited by the people of God, whether under the old or the new testament. Of this it is said in Deuteronomy, xi. 12, that "it is a land,

which the Lord careth for, and that his eyes are always upon it from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." That the agency of the beings signified by the eyes of Jehovah is meant to be thus limited to the land of Israel, either temporally or spiritually considered, or to extend no farther to other lands, at least in its beneficial effects, than may be necessary or conducive to the welfare and repose of that, farther appears from the nature of the subject, upon which the angel is here speaking, the restoration of the temple and people of God; and likewise from the words, that follow the passage above cited from the second book of Chronicles. The eyes of Jehovah are there said to run to and fro in the earth, "that the people may be strong whose heart is perfect with him*, or whole towards him;" that is to say, that the faithful people and true worshippers, who were then

* לַחֲזֹק עִם לִבָּם שָׁלֵם אֵלָיו. Our authorized version renders these words, "to shew himself strong in behalf of those, whose heart is perfect with him." The form of expression, according to this rendering, is doubly elliptical, both the antecedent noun or pronoun, as well as the relative, being omitted. In the rendering above given only one ellipsis is supposed and supplied, that most common one of the pronoun relative. Our translators were guided by the punctuation, which has erroneously substituted Chirik for Pathach under עַם, and joined that word to the following by Makkaph. The Vulgate is on my side; et præbent fortitudinem his, qui corde perfecto credunt in eum.

Israelites and who are now christians, so long as they continue to hold fast their character of truth and fidelity, may live in safety and prosperity upon earth, or at least may be preserved upon it, though it may sometimes be in circumstances of weakness and adversity. The nature of the beings, thus represented as the divine agents upon earth, is not indeed clearly defined; but none can suppose them to be any less or any other, than the holy angels. Of this however we may, and ought to have, stronger proof.

That the stone is a symbol of Christ we have before seen; and it is also well known and universally admitted, that the Lamb in the Revelation of St. John is another type of the Redeemer. Now as the stone is engraved with seven eyes, so is the Lamb described as having seven eyes, and therefore we may safely conclude, that the seven eyes in both cases typify the same subjects. But the seven eyes upon the stone are said to be the eyes of Jehovah; and the seven eyes of the Lamb are explained to signify "the seven spirits of God*;" consequently the seven eyes on the stone denote the seven spirits of God. Moreover, of the eyes of Jehovah, it is said, that they run to

* Revelation, v. 6. The masculine relative plainly decides that *οφθαλμοι*, not *πνευματα*, is the word intended to be explained.

and fro through all the earth, or land ; and of the seven spirits, it is declared, that they are sent forth into all the earth, or land. Though there be not a perfect sameness, there is still a strong and remarkable similarity between the two expressions ; and such a similarity as cannot be supposed to have been undesigned by St. John. We may therefore consider ourselves warranted, upon the authority of the beloved disciple, to understand the seven eyes sculptured upon the stone in the same sense, as the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth, or land.

The sending of these spirits, or their running to and fro through the earth, or land, and the errands, on which they are sent, errands of the divine providence, to superintend the concerns, protect the persons, and direct the counsels of his people, when compared with the account given of themselves by the angelic horsemen in the first part of the vision, plainly bespeak them to be, if not the same persons, at least beings of the same nature ; that is to say, angels, sent forth to minister in the great work of introducing, rearing up, and perfecting the kingdom of Christ. They are called "spirits of God," that is to say, belonging to God, "his angels, excelling in strength, doing his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his words," "the host of Jehovah,"

under the command of the divine Archangel, who appeared as their captain at the opening of the vision. They are here and in the Apocalypse described as seven, not with an intention to express their exact number, but to intimate the fulness and completeness of the number thus employed, and their entire sufficiency to the discharge of the high trust reposed in them.

In the fourth part of the vision it was promised to Joshua, the high priest, that "he should have ministers" among them that stood before the Archangel. The same thing is here declared to Zerubbabel, the prince of Judah. The Son of God "hath separated them" from other officers and ministries not connected with Israel, to minister unto Zerubbabel, in his arduous undertaking of rebuilding the temple and reestablishing the polity of God's chosen people. The fact of the holy angels being assigned as ministers both to the prince and to the priest, powerfully illustrates the fourth part of the vision, where the promise of the principedom is annexed to the priesthood, as it exhibits those heavenly spirits employed in the diversities of the administrations committed to them, but under the directions of the same Lord, to guard and defend, to warn and remind, to enlighten and console, and in every way to educate and train up the children

of grace, until they finally become the inheritors of glory.

Although it be not necessary to the explanation of this part of Zechariah's vision, yet it may prevent objections to some part of the interpretation above given, to notice, that in the Revelation of St. John, "seven lamps of fire" are described as burning before the throne of the divine majesty, and are declared to signify the seven spirits of God. The learned Joseph Mede* and others have supposed, that the seven eyes of the Lamb and the seven lamps, since they receive the same interpretation from inspired authority, must signify the same subjects. But do they in fact receive the same interpretation? Doubtless not. For the seven spirits typified by the eyes of the Lamb are said to be "sent forth into all the earth;" which is not said of the seven spirits represented by the lamps. On the contrary, the lamps are said to be "before the throne;" and there doubtless the spirits also are to be considered as holding their station. The seven spirits then typified by the lamps, and those by the eyes of the Lamb, are described differently; and therefore it cannot be concluded, merely from the application to them of the same general terms, "spirits of God," in which there is some

* Discourse, 10, p. 42 of his works.

ambiguity, as it may signify either divine spirits, or created spiritual beings, whose powers God directs and uses, that the seven spirits in both instances are the same identical beings, or even in the same order of beings.

But farther; in the beginning of the Apocalypse, the apostle implores for christians, grace and peace, "from Him, who was, and is, and is to come; and from the seven spirits, which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ." From the place here assigned to the seven spirits, between the Father and the Son, and from the invocation of them as joint authors of grace and peace with those two divine persons, we must believe them to be no created spirits belonging to God, as his ministers, but the very essential spirit of God, the Holy Ghost himself; who is described as sevenfold, in regard not to his personality, but to the succeeding imagery, by which he is represented to the apostle in vision; and to the manifold variety and entire perfection of his gifts and graces, which are the things denoted by that imagery; and which being sufficient to meet and satisfy all the wants of God's people, are expressed by the number seven, the number of completion and perfection in scripture.

Mede indeed objects to "the uncouthness of calling one spirit seven;" and it cannot be denied

that the objection has some force. But it is repelled by observing, that in Isaiah, xi. 2, the one spirit of Jehovah is first distinctly mentioned as resting on the future Messiah, and then is described, according to the variety of his gifts, as several spirits, "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Besides, the Holy Ghost, being the principal of spiritual light and heat to all the congregations and all the individual members of the church on earth, represented by the seven lamps of the candlestick, is typified by a like emblem in heaven, in order to point out from whom it is; that they receive their spiritual power of shining; that is to say, by "seven lamps of fire," which are in consequence interpreted to be seven spirits. Here it is also to be carefully observed, that although the symbols used to typify the Holy Ghost, and the congregations and members of the church, be similar, yet they are not the same. The lamps betokening the latter, are plainly cups or dishes of gold containing oil, by which their flames are fed. But the lamps, representing the former, are not described as being of gold, as having any kind of cup or dish, or as fed with oil. Nor could they in any reason, or with a due regard to the consistency of the

symbols and their subjects, be so described. The Holy Ghost, being himself the spirit of truth, the fountain of light, can neither need nor receive supplies from another quarter, and consequently cannot be represented by the same symbol, as those subjects, which need and receive grace from him. He is therefore described under a different type, under the figure of "seven lamps of fire." The expression is not of frequent occurrence in scripture, and seems never to be used properly, for material lamps, but only as in Genesis, xv. 17, for a pure bright flame*. In this sense it is used by St. John. The seven lamps were "lamps of fire" only; without vessel or pabulum; seven pure and bright flames, self-lighted and self-nourished, a light† "without any darkness at all;" the same, as those lambent flames, those tongues of fire, which rested on the first christians at the feast of Pentecost; betokening the presence of the divine spirit. Thus it appears, that they were emblems duly calculated to typify the Holy Ghost, the giver of spiritual illumination and grace. Thus too it

* In Zechariah, xii. 6, it is predicted that the governors of Judah shall be like *נר תש*, in a sheaf, which our translators have rendered "a torch of fire;" but it does not appear to signify any thing more, than a violent flame, without any reference to the materials, by which it is nourished.

† 1 John, i, 5.

appears, that the seven lamps of fire could not be intended to typify angels, or any kind of created intelligencies; for however high and holy their nature may be, they must still derive their illumination from him, who is "the light," and the only, everflowing source of light, to his creatures.

Lastly, the lamps are described to be not upon the throne, the seat of the Father and the Son*, but before it, to signify that he proceedeth from the Father and the Son. In this way the omnipresent spirit is represented, as forming the communion between God and all his rational, obedient creatures both in earth and heaven, and consequently, also, between the church militant and the church triumphant.

11. Then answered I, and said unto him; "What are those two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick, and upon the left side thereof?"

* I say, of the Son, as well as of the Father, for the Lamb is described by St. John, v. 7, vii. 17, as going up to the throne, and afterwards as being in the midst of it. Hence it is to be inferred, that when he went up to the throne and received the seven-sealed volume, he took his seat upon it. In like manner the son of man is represented in Daniel, vii. 13, as conducted and advancing through the great assembly of blessed spirits up to the throne of the Ancient of days; and although the prophet does not describe his inthronization, yet it may be inferred from the texts, in which he is said to sit at the right hand of the Father.

The situation of the olive-trees has been described before, as being on the two flat sides of the candlestick, whence the branches did not grow out, which are here called the right and left sides. Though they had been noticed by Zechariah, as among the things presented to his view, and included in his former question, "What are these my Lord?" Yet since they were not specifically distinguished in any part of the preceding discourse, he requests information of the interpreting angel. But immediately recollecting himself, either as having omitted the mention of an important object, which he had before remarked as needing elucidation, or as observing one, which had not before struck his attention, the prophet doubles his question on the angel, that is to say, without waiting for an answer to the former, he propounds a second.

12. And I answered a second time, and said unto him, "What are the two branches of the olive-trees, which through two oil gutters
13. drain off the oil from them?" And he spake unto me, saying, "Knowest thou not what these be?" And I said, "No my Lord."
14. Then said he, "These are the two sons of oil, which stand before the Lord of the whole earth."

The two subjects of the prophet's latter question are involved in considerable difficulty. It is indeed certain, that they were things intimately connected with the olive-trees, and in all probability parts of them. But in the sense of branches, or parts of a tree, the Hebrew word occurs no where else in scripture; and of the other significations, which are dissonant and wide of each other, none is adapted to this place. Neither is the word any where to be found in a radical or primitive form, whence we might bring it down to some signification, that might meet the exigency of the passage. We must therefore either find a root for it, in some cognate language, or by a diligent comparison of the various senses, in which it appears, trace up the original idea, and then bring it down again to some meaning applicable to the case before us. Michaelis and Simonis have explored in vain the extent of the Arabic tongue, and the former has endeavoured to atone for his want of success by vague and unsatisfactory conjectures. Dr. Blaney indeed, from a verb of similar letters, in the Syriac language*, has ventured to render

* The Syriac verb **ܫܒܠ** signifies to direct or lead in the way, whence its derivative **ܫܒܠܝܬ** may signify conductors, directors. But we need examples to prove, that we can understand it of persons employed, first in collecting, and then

the word, orderers, "the orderers of the olive-trees," and is inclined to suppose, that by those orderers we are to understand two beings, probably in human shape, who had not appeared before, at least had not been noticed by Zechariah, but who typify nothing less, than Moses and our Lord Jesus Christ. But supposing this derivation to be ever so probable, what, it may be asked, is the image offered to us? What are we to figure to ourselves, that the orderers of the olive-trees are doing? Are we to suppose, that the two trees were continually distilling their oil on all sides round, and that the two orderers, in some unexplained and unintelligible manner, collected it and turned it into the spouts or gutters, by which it was conveyed to the bowl? Other suppositions may be made and questions put upon them to as little purpose as the above; but in all such, one thing will be obvious, that the two persons ought rather to have been called orderers of the oil, than of the olive-trees. The symbols in all other parts of

in arranging, the various and scattered parts of a subject; for the two orderers must here be supposed to be busied in receiving and gathering the drops of oil trickling from the fruit of the two trees, and bringing them by some determined course to the determined point. It should seem also that for this purpose, they would need a variety of vessels and implements, which are not mentioned by the prophet.

Zechariah's vision are clear and distinct, but here, with Dr. Blaney's rendering, no distinct image is presented to the mind, nor is the mind capable of forming any for itself. It is therefore much safer and more satisfactory, to have recourse to the other method before mentioned, that of diligently comparing the various senses, in which the word is used, thence ascending to the radical idea, and then tracing it down to a ramification, that will meet the exigency of the passage. This has been done by our learned lexicographers, Taylor and Parkhurst, whose independent concurrence (I say independent, because, though Parkhurst followed Taylor in point of time, he was far from treading in his steps) gives great weight to their opinions. "The original notion," says Taylor, "seems to be a stretching on, forward, or in length." "The idea," says Parkhurst, "appears to be, to impel, thrust forward." There is here difference enough to mark the independence and originality of the two authors in conducting their investigation; and hence, since they agree in bringing it to the same end and in giving to the word a meaning and rendering conformable to that of our learned translators, "the branches," of the olive-trees, we may consider ourselves, as having attained to as high a degree of certainty as the

case will admit of, and as in such cases can often be attained*.

The two branches were probably remarkable in their form and position, but still more so, from their office and effect. It is plain, that they acted as a kind of drain to the trees, discharging the oil, without the proper and natural medium of fruit and the pressure of it, into conductors, which again conveyed it to the bowl set on the summit of the shaft of the candlestick. Those conductors are called spouts, or gutters, which, as Dr. Blaney observes, were "laid inclining from the olive-trees to the bowl on the top of the candlestick, so as to receive the fluid flowing from the trees and pour it continually into the bowl to supply the waste." The Hebrew word occurs no where else in scripture, and there is

* The noun appears both in a masculine and feminine form. In the former our translators have twice rendered it "paths," and many times "ears of corn." In the latter they have rendered it once, "channel," twice, "flood," and many times, "ears of corn." Since it so frequently occurs in the last sense, there can be little or no doubt, that when applied to olive-trees, it must signify something in them analogous to an ear of corn, that is to say, bunches of fruit, shooting forth from the trees. Of these were only two; at least the two noticed by Zechariah were very conspicuous, through which all the oil of the olives was discharged. Though I prefer the rendering, "bunches," yet I have retained "branches" in my translation and commentary, out of respect to our translators and other high authorities; it being of no importance either to the figure or to the interpretation, whether of the two be taken.

considerable difficulty in investigating its etymology and determining its exact signification. But happily its position in the sentence and its connection with the other subjects there mentioned are such, as to leave us without doubt as to its general meaning here; where it plainly denotes some instrument or vessel, by which the oil was conveyed from the two branches of the olive-trees to the bowl. In rendering it I have preferred the word gutters to pipes, which are not open vessels, as these must have been.

In our English version these instruments are said to be golden, and to “empty out of themselves the golden *oil*,” the word *oil* being printed in italics, as being deficient in the original. Dr. Blaney has rendered differently; “which through two golden spouts drain off the gold from them.” The original word in both places signifies gold; but in the latter it certainly betokens oil; for, as Dr. Blaney observes, “the liquor drawn from the olive-trees must be oil;” which is figuratively denominated gold on account of its colour*, its brightness, and intrinsic excellency. I have thought it the better way, both to abandon in my version the strong figure, which Dr. Blaney

* In Psalm, lxxviii. 13, the author seems to have had in his eye the beautiful green tinge which appears in new oil, when he describes the feathers of a dove as covered with a verdure of gold, or golden verdure.

has retained, and to refuse admission to the same word as an adjective, joined with oil as a substantive understood, which is the method pursued by our translators, though perhaps the substitution of the thing signified for the sign may be thought a bold measure. At the same time, since it is likely, that the gutters or spouts should be described by a word expressing rather their use than their material, which in the figure before us, where all the utensils are of gold, forms no distinction, and which is immediately afterwards used in the signification of oil, I have rendered the word gold by oil in this place also.

Upon hearing Zechariah's question, the angel rebuked him, as he had done before, for his dulness; "Knowest thou not what these be?" And then explained the symbols in the following manner; "These are the two sons of oil, which stand before the Lord of the whole earth." The angel, as it should seem, in order to follow up his rebuke, not only replies in such enigmatical terms, as would still give the prophet occasion to exercise his spiritual discernment, but passes over entirely without notice the former of his two questions. In order to find an answer to that therefore, we are left like Zechariah, though with greater advantages, to our own diligence in searching and comparing the scriptures.

It has been noticed before, that St. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, uses the olive-tree, as an image to represent the church of God. He borrowed it from the eleventh chapter of the prophet Jeremiah, where the Jewish church is described to have been formerly a "green olive-tree, fair and of goodly fruit," but in consequence of transgression to have had "a fire kindled upon it, and its branches broken." In the apostolic epistle the same tree is represented, as having a firm root, meaning thereby Abraham, the heir of God's promises, as still alive and verdant, though with a number of its branches, the unbelieving Jews, broken off, and as having received in their stead a graft from a wild olive, the Gentile church. This also is described, as growing and flourishing on the same parent stock, and receiving its proportionate share of the same nourishment as the natural branches, which still remain upon it. These passages from Jeremiah and St. Paul compared together and with that before us, would decide the interpretation of the last, if it could be made to harmonize with that given to the other symbols. But the church compounded of Jewish and Gentile believers is already set before us in the significant symbol of the golden candlestick; and there cannot be any reason imagined for presenting us

with it again under a new symbol, while the former is yet standing in full view. It would at least give occasion to suppose, that the other type afforded such an imperfect representation of the antitype, as without an additional figure was likely to escape the apprehension of the studious reader, or to be mistaken for something else; an imperfection truly, with which it is little chargeable. Besides, the sacred oil, the produce of the olive-trees, and the apparatus, by which it is conveyed to the candlestick, bespeak them to be something different from the candlestick itself. Otherwise the church would be exhibited as the fountain of divine and moral truth, the conveyer of it, and the recipient of it, all at once. These are incongruities, that must be fatal to any interpretation that shall fall into them.

We must therefore find for the two olive-trees an interpretation different from that, which we deduce from the use of the same image by Jeremiah and St. Paul. Nor is it to be apprehended, that any confusion or uncertainty will thereby be introduced into the interpretation of prophetic symbols. For although we admit the olive-tree to be a proper and established emblem of the church, yet when it is plainly determined to some other subject by the exigency of the passage,

or is used in such connection with other symbols, as to make that interpretation productive of inconsistency or impropriety, no greater inconvenience can arise from attributing to it another, than what is experienced from the various senses, that are given in different passages to the same word.

From the close connection however, which the appendages to the olive-trees form and keep up between them and the candlestick, that interpretation alone can fairly be considered, as even approximating to the right mark, which shall join the subjects represented by them in the most intimate relation to the church. This is the effect of Dr. Blaney's judicious and satisfactory interpretation, which he might have proposed in stronger terms, than he has thought fit to employ. "We may fairly presume them," says he, "to be no other, than the two dispensations of the law and the gospel, under which were communicated the precious oracles of divine truth, which illuminate the soul and make men wise unto salvation." As the olive-tree is the sole producer of that rich and salutary fluid, oil, so are the dispensations of God in the scriptures of the old and new testaments, the sole fountains of the spiritual oil, the only sources, whence divine and moral, religious or saving

truth, is derived to men in perfect purity, with strong conviction, upon infallible authority, under proper and sufficient sanctions. All that they know or can know of God, or of themselves in their relations to Him and to their fellow creatures, is derived from them, or must be referred to them; nor can any dictum on these subjects be pronounced true, until it has been submitted to and has past that sacred ordeal. Hence it appears, that the olive-trees are altogether fit and adequate symbols to represent the dispensations of the law and the gospel: and not only so; but it may be confidently affirmed, that they cannot, consistently with their operation and their appendages, be intended to represent any thing else. This will yet more plainly appear in the sequel.

The olive-trees give out their oil by two peculiar and conspicuous branches, which of course are intended to represent some eminent and especial instruments for the propagation of true religion. These are the ministers of the law and the gospel, or I should rather say, of the christian religion, considered as two distinct bodies of men, following, in analogy to the candlestick, the grand division of the universal church into its two primitive and principal parts, the Jewish and the Gentile. For the christian ministry

actually fulfils the office of the Jewish priesthood, administering the old dispensation to its true and best intent and purpose, not according to the "letter, which killeth, but according to the spirit, which giveth life." The symbol is not found elsewhere in scripture; and therefore the interpretation here given cannot be justified by a parallel instance. But it arises so naturally and directly out of that, which has been given of the olive-trees, that it can hardly be rejected or even questioned, if that be admitted.

The two branches were eminent and conspicuous in the olive-trees, so are the ministers of the two dispensations eminent and conspicuous parts thereof. The priesthood indeed under the old testament seemed to act a more important and splendid part, than that under the new. But they only seemed so to do; because the high-priest of that profession abode among men, and because it consisted so much in external ordinances, which caught the eye; whereas in the christian dispensation, the high-priest is in heaven, unseen but by the eye of faith; and the ordinances of it are not of a shewy kind, so as to attract in a high degree the bodily senses, and to invest the minister with high personal importance. Yet is the ministry of the gospel extolled by St. Paul*

* 2 Corinthians, iii. 6 and following verses.

above that of the law, in proportion to the superior excellency of the dispensation. Its want therefore of external splendour, derived from a pompous celebration of sacred rites, will not make it a less important part of the christian dispensation, than the Aaronical priesthood was of the legal. The truth is dispensed under it by the word, the holy spirit, and the ministry; the divine wisdom having joined the last to the two former, who shall presume to separate them; or how shall a man depreciate that without injury to the glory of the two others?

The two branches shed forth the juice of the trees to the support of the lights on the candlestick, so do the ministers of the christian religion convey to their congregations the sacred truths contained in the dispensations of the law and the gospel. But the truth of this interpretation will appear more clearly, when we have considered the figure, by which the angel explains the signification of the two branches to the prophet.

“These are the two sons of oil, which stand before the Lord of the whole earth.” An expression nearly parallel to this is to be found in Isaiah, v. 1. “My beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill;” literally, “in a horn, or high hill, the son of oil, or of fatness,” evidently signifying a rich and fertile soil, abounding in

choice productions serviceable or delightful to man. The signification of the figure before us is the same, only with a spiritual application. The two sons of oil are evidently two subjects abundantly possessing and capable of supplying, adequately to the wants of the church, those divine and moral truths, which enlighten men's minds with the knowledge, and touch their hearts with the love, of God and of the things that are conducive to salvation. Now the two subjects, which above all others are copiously replenished with this saving knowledge and able to impart the same to others, are and can be no other, than the ministers of the christian religion, regarded as two bodies in respect to the analogy before mentioned. The sacred truths of the old and new testaments are the subjects of their daily study and of their nightly meditation. The knowledge of these is at once the object and the reward of their labours, and the delight and joy of their leisure. That which they have obtained by studious and long-continued research, they continually unfold to their flocks in diligent teaching and preaching, and to the world in instructive writings, casting around them at the same time the lustre of their sober, moral, and pious examples. Accordingly they are said to stand before the Lord of the whole earth, the whole territory of

Christendom, as ministers of his presence, protected by his providence, animated by the sense of his favour, strengthened by his might, ever ready to act or to suffer at his command; and as "stewards of his mysteries, scribes well instructed unto his kingdom," able and prepared on every occasion of need or of duty to do the part of the "wise householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasures things new and old."

It has been noticed, that the olive-trees appeared to shed out their oil at once through the two branches, preternaturally matured and produced without the intervention of ripened fruit*, or of expression. Those operations of nature and of the manual labour and skill are confined to certain seasons of the year; but in the symbolical trees the flux of juice being produced and poured forth without those media, is not limited to any particular seasons, but is perennial and perpetual. This is quite suitable to the nature of the subjects represented by them, which continually send forth their sacred stream of truth, without intermission or failure, in all places and

* I have before expressed my opinion, that the word שֶׁבֶט would be more properly rendered bunches than branches, by analogy to its signification of ears of corn. If so rendered, certainly the oil could not be said to be produced "without the intervention of ripened fruit;" but still the human labour of expression would be wanting.

at all seasons and periods, through the hands and instruments appointed to convey the same.

Again, the two branches send out the oil through two oil gutters or spouts ; such vessels, as are the proper and common means of conveying a fluid to its appointed reservoir, or to the place, where it is to be used. Those gutters or spouts must consequently represent the channels, as it were, through which the ministers of the divine dispensations convey the blessings of religious, saving truth. These are plainly those institutions, both of divine and of human origin, which afford to the ministry the most convenient and edifying means of making known and publishing the truth, to the conviction and conversion of infidels and sinners, and to "the building up of the household of God in their most holy faith." Such are the feast of the Lord's day, analogous to the Jewish sabbath, the sacrament of baptism, analogous to the right of circumcision, the sacrament of the Lord's supper, analogous to the ordinance of the passover, and the various opportunities, which either ecclesiastical authority or pious usage have established for the celebration of divine worship and for teaching and preaching the word of truth, whether in a public or private manner. By these also we are to understand orthodox creeds and

confessions of faith, liturgies, rules of discipline and conduct; together with the oral and written instructions in sermons, catechisms, expositions, commentaries, and all the ways in which the truths of religion are communicated to mankind. The truth displayed in the influential lustre of a christian life, together with private advice and admonition, are not peculiar parts of the ministerial office, and so are not included in the symbol of the oil gutters. They are betokened by the light of the lamps.

Spouts and gutters are vessels or instruments intended for and adapted to the conveyance of fluids. These consequently must convey the oil some whither; but whither is not specifically expressed: yet it is not difficult to attain to a certainty on this point. The candlestick had lamps, which needed to be fed with oil, a bowl to contain the oil, and pipes to convey it to the lamps, but not a word is said as to whence it came, how it was conveyed, or even whether there were any such thing. On the other hand, we have two olive-trees planted one on each side of the candlestick, with two remarkable boughs shedding forth a constant flux of oil, which is received and conveyed by two spouts or gutters; but whither is not mentioned. The silence in these two instances is evidently studied, and the

understanding of the reader is expected to supply the place of words, which it may well do with all the force and plainness of intuition. The proximity of the olive-trees to the candlestick, and the material adaptation of the gutters to convey, and of the bowl to receive, the oil, bespeak the symbols to be made for each other, or rather to be only harmonious and mutually adapted parts of one complex and magnificent symbol, in which the bowl is the appointed receptacle of the oil continually poured forth by the spouts.

The bowl then being the reservoir of all the oil poured forth from the two olive-trees, must necessarily signify something, which is the recipient of the whole body of truth made known by the two dispensations. Now such a recipient is no where to be found but in the body of the church universal. That, and that alone, continually receives and entirely contains all the narratives, doctrines, precepts, promises, threatenings, and various declarations, which are incessantly deposited in its bosom by the ministers of religion, deriving them from the legal and evangelical dispensations, and giving them out by their various edifying, persuasive, and authoritative administrations.

In confirmation of this, it may be observed, that the bowl is described, as set immediately on the top of the candlestick, meaning evidently the top of the shaft, which springing out of the midst of the base, represents together with it the Lord Jesus Christ, as at once the foundation of the church, and as the head, the principal of vitality to the whole body. The church therefore, founded and built upon Christ, is the only thing that can be properly represented, as it is, by the bowl standing fixed upon him.

At the same time it is to be carefully observed, that the bowl does not and indeed cannot typify the church, as it is known to the world in the outward and visible persons and actions of its members, but the universal body of it in the abstract, taken as a corporation aggregate; which, though it have a positive and actual existence in *rerum natura*, is not cognizable by the corporeal organs, but is discernible in contemplation only to the eye of the understanding. This observation is also sufficient to prevent, at least to meet, the objection, which might otherwise be raised, that the universal church being represented by the lamps of the candlestick, needed not to be represented again by the bowl. For this double representation, far from being superfluous, is necessary in regard both to the

distinctness of the type and to the completeness of the antitype.

If the lamps had been figured, as fed with oil from the trees, without the intervention of the bowl, then there must have been a number of gutters on each side equal to the number of lamps, and also an equal number of branches, shedding oil each into its proper conductor. But this would have offered to view the whole figure exceedingly intricate and confused, so that any convenient means of avoiding such an effect must be thought eligible.

Moreover, although the symbol so constructed would have sufficiently typified the church, as nourished by the saving truths of the two dispensations, yet it would not have represented the church at unity. With Christ indeed it would still have appeared to be at unity, by the stalks of the lamps proceeding from the shaft; but it would not have been shewn, as at unity in itself; for thus every congregation would have seemed to have its own separate ministry, sacraments, and administrations; a state of things, which is totally at variance with every notion of unity. Now that attribute is dwelt upon by St. Paul* in so many places, at such length, and with so

* Ex gr. Romans, xii. 4, 5. 1 Corinthians, xii. 13—27, Ephesians, ii. 21, 22, iv. 4, 5, 6, 12—16, Colossians, ii. 19.

much force and emphasis, that it must be allowed to be of the highest importance, and essential, if not to the very existence, at least to the well-being of the church. It might therefore have been reasonably expected, that in so full and perfect an emblem of it, as the candlestick is evidently intended to be, this particular would occupy a distinguished place. But the only way of representing it, which the figure seems to admit of, certainly the only one, in which it can be supposed to be actually represented, is by the bowl, into which the sacred oil is carried from the two olive-trees, by one branch and one gutter proper to each, into a common receptacle, communicating by means of pipes with every lamp.

But perhaps it will be objected here, that since the bowl represents the universal church, it ought to be seen bearing a light, that it may shine and illuminate the world. The objection is groundless. The universal church, as we have before seen, is an abstract being, a corporate body indefinitely extended, a thing in itself not cognizable by the outward senses, perceptible only to mental apprehension. To have represented it therefore as shining to the eyes of men, attracting their attention, actually informing and enlightening them, would have been to represent it as something different from what it

is, possessing attributes, which it has not and cannot have. At the same time, as it is apprehended by the understandings of the faithful, it appears full of saving truth, which in its congregations and its individual members is in very deed displayed, presented to the apprehension of the world, by confessions of faith, by exterior worship, by visible rites, and by a course of just and holy conduct, according to what has been before said.

The bowl is made of the same material as the lamps and is filled with the same substance; for the pipes proceeding from it and passing into every one of the lamps, make their cups or dishes common recipients of its oil. This plainly signifies, that the nearest and strictest relation and intercommunity subsist between the subjects represented thereby; the relation indeed of parts to the whole, the intercommunity of members with the body, nourished by the same food, pervaded by the same circulating blood, animated by the same living spirit, according to the image repeatedly employed by St. Paul to represent the unity of the church.

The pipes, which are the media of communication between the lamps and the bowl, answer the same purpose to the dishes or cups of the former, as the two oil gutters do to the latter. They

consequently represent the same things in respect to the several congregations, as the others do in respect to the whole body of the catholic church ; that is to say, the ministry of the two dispensations conveying by their administration of sacred rites and offices, the doctrines of truth and salvation to their respective flocks.

It will now perhaps be asked ; since the lamps are supposed to be alight, and they could not light themselves, who it is, that hath kindled their flames ? The work not being represented by any symbol, is plainly intended to be conceived, as that of an invisible hand, of one who operates by internal secret influence. This answers precisely to the effect of the holy spirit upon christians. In vain would the truth be heard by their ears and received by their understandings from the two dispensations, through the ministry, if the Holy Ghost by his warnings, illuminations, remindings, encouragements, consolations, and all his manifold aids, gifts, and influences did not give effect to the word published and to the labours of those who publish it. He is with the beginning and at the end of the christian church. The knowledge of God, the penetrating fear and love of him, the implicit trust in his all-ruling providence, all that is comprehended in a sound faith and the sincere

confession of it, spiritual wisdom, a discerning conscience, and all the perfect fruits of justice and charity, comprising every kind and form of goodness, that is well pleasing in the sight of God and truly useful to man, with comfort, peace, and joy, manifested by thanksgiving, resignation, and contentment, all proceed from the operation of the Holy Ghost, bringing the principle of truth into action, kindling the sacred oil into a bright and steady flame.

From this part of the vision thus interpreted we may clearly collect, that although it had a direct and immediate tendency to encourage Zerubbabel and the Jews in rebuilding the temple and restoring the city, by a prospect of final success and approaching glory; yet its principal and essential object was to predict the foundation and erection, the establishment and perfection, of the christian church by the hand of the Son of God, as its Founder, Redeemer, High-priest, and King, continually protecting and governing it by his power and providence, enlightening, admonishing, nourishing, supporting, animating, and comforting it by the Holy Ghost. The symbol, by which this is represented, is truly magnificent in its general conception, and truly admirable for exactness in the detail of its construction. At the same time,

it must be humbly acknowledged, that the catholic church, thus typified in beauty and glory, is not such as we at present behold it, but rather such as it ought to be, such as it is in its capabilities, according to the exemplar formed of it in the divine mind ; such however, as it is destined to appear, and certainly will appear hereafter, even upon this earth, when "God shall take to himself his great power and reign," and "his will shall be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Let us not then for the present tarnish the beauty and glory of the representation, by turning our attention, when it is not so directed, to the actual state of the subject. In some of its congregations, and in many of its individual members, the church yet wears an aspect not unanswerable to the pure candlestick, with its vivid, steady, and undecaying lights. In these let us take complacency, let us rejoice and exult. Besides, the redeemer yet continues to separate those seven into the hands of his ministers, by their agency collecting new congregations of believers to shine with living lustre as lamps of the candlestick, shedding its light farther and farther into the remote and dark corners of the earth. Why it has pleased our founder and prince to proceed thus leisurely in rearing his temple and extending his sceptre, is not for us to know. It is one

of the deep things of God, who represses all anxious enquiries into the mysterious subject, by involving it in the majestic obscurity of his unrevealed will. "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy." Let us, who are the objects of that mercy, not fail or slacken in our endeavours to diffuse abroad the light of our candlestick, among the nations, that still "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death," committing and commending, at the same time, our efforts to the supreme disposer in the submission of faith, and rejoicing in the conscious satisfaction, that we have long since been accustomed to receive the sacred golden oil from the two sons of oil, "by hands and instruments duly subordinated to the power of his spirit."

PART VI.

CAP. V. 1—4.

IN the fifth part of the vision we have seen the catholic church founded and built up in Jesus Christ, protected, directed, and governed by his providence, sustained and nourished by his truth, animated, illuminated, and sanctified by his spirit, shining in the beauty of holiness as the light of the world. Such it is in a state of perfection, by virtue of its institution. But the part of the vision now before us presents a far different scene, and plainly indicates, that in the course of its history many of its essential characteristics would disappear, and that the proper fruits of a true faith, kept whole and undefiled in such a virtuous and godly course of life, as might be expected among the members of a community so constituted, maintained, disciplined, and regulated, would not be actually or generally produced and brought to maturity. This

warning was necessary to prevent surprise and to repel the argument, that might else be drawn against religion, from the misconduct of its professors. Nor was it less kind than necessary, for in this part of the vision christians are awfully reminded, that the promises and blessings of God are conditional ; that notwithstanding the state of favour and acceptance with God, in which they are placed, the nature of sin and disobedience is not changed with respect to them ; that they have received no licence to transgress the divine law ; and that the justice of the Almighty will not overlook iniquity, nor his vengeance cease to follow it.

The view here opened of the sixth part of the vision is widely different from that, which has hitherto been taken of it by former commentators and expositors. After ascribing to the candlestick and its accompaniments in the fifth part an evangelical signification, more or less agreeable to the exposition above given of them, they suppose the prophet, in the progress of his vision, to fly off from christian times and subjects, and to revert to the days of Zerubbabel and Joshua, threatening the Jewish people, either immediately on account of present sins, or prospectively in order to prevent future ones, with a repetition of their past woes or with still deeper destruction.

Such a mode of interpretation, so manifestly pregnant with disorder and perplexity, could hardly have been entertained, unless an erroneous view had been previously taken of the structure of the whole prophecy. Instead of being treated as an unbroken chain of predictions delivered in the successive parts, acts, or scenes of one continuous dramatic vision, it has been dealt with, as if it were a book of prophecies, in which each prophecy is a whole by itself, and being severally determined to a particular period of time and course of events, bears no other relation to those preceding or following, than what accident may have undesignedly effected, by placing in contiguity of position, predictions, that refer to proximate times. In such collections we have no reason to be surprised or offended at finding a prediction relating to a less distant point of futurity, arranged after one that looks farther into things to come. But the vision of Zechariah is quite another kind of thing. It is not a book of prophecies, but a prophecy contained in a book. It is not a mere aggregate, but a perfect whole; the narrative of a single revelation given in one night, as the prophet has sufficiently distinguished, by dating not only the vision itself, but those, which next preceded and followed it. It is to be treated therefore,

as other prophecies are, or ought to be treated, which are entire in themselves, though forming distinct portions of large collections, as consisting of consecutive parts, not as if those parts were shuffled and intermixed, without regard to time or place. Indeed, if such a method, or rather such a contempt of method, had been really pursued by the prophets, there could not be the least hope of attaining or even approximating to certainty, and hardly to a low degree of probability, in the interpretation of their writings, especially where the darkness of such confusion is deepened by the aid of symbolical imagery.

The narrative of Zechariah's vision in itself affords not the least countenance to any such imputation. It is evidently intended to be, and to be taken for, an orderly composition. The whole is divided into parts; but the parts are again united by proper and sufficient marks of connection into one whole. To any attentive and unprejudiced examiner, the divisions will appear, not as lines of demarcation contrived to separate visions independent in their purposes and in the nature of their subjects, but on the contrary, like the books and chapters of a regular history, designed to assist the understanding and the memory in comprehending and retaining the whole subject, by tracing out and treating with

clearness the parts of which it is composed. In such a work it would be revolting to common sense and inconsistent with all notion of propriety, if after having advanced in the progress of events for five or six hundred years, the narrative should roll backwards to the period of its commencement, and speak of times and circumstances, which have been dismissed from the reader's attention and were terminated before some of the events already related had a beginning.

It is no exception to this argument, that according to the interpretation above given, the prophecy, after having advanced in the third part to the calling of the Gentiles, the establishment of christianity in the world, and even to that last and happiest era of its establishment, to which we still look forwards, is supposed to return in the fourth part to the period of its delivery. In this the prophet only followed the common practice of the historian, when having taken a wide and comprehensive survey of some large portion of his subject, he comes to narrate events in detail, and of course returns to the point, whence he took his general view. It may therefore be presumed, that if an interpretation can be proposed, which shall follow the order of events, and preserve the unity of the vision,

maintaining at the same time the congruity of the emblems, it will bear away the preference from those arbitrary expositions, which go to deprive it of all harmony in design and to dissolve the continuity of its parts.

This seemed the proper place for the introduction of these observations, as being the point, to which they most forcibly apply. For since an accusation of great corruption in religion and morals is plainly implied in this part of the vision, it is of prime necessity to understand against what people and times the charge is laid. But if the parts of the vision follow each other, as I contend they do, in the order of time, then, since we have been brought in the last preceding part to a time subsequent to the introduction of christianity, and have been presented with an image of the christian church in a pure and perfect state, it follows, that the corruption of religion and morals, which is here indicated, must be a corruption of the christian religion and morals.

1. And I lifted mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a flying roll.

The rendering of Archbishop Newcome and others, which is followed here, is quite agreeable to the Hebrew idiom and is preferable to that of our authorized version, which seems to

connect the present scene somewhat too closely with the foregoing; as if the prophet had only to turn himself, in order to see in a different quarter this new emblem. It is rather to be supposed, that Zechariah continued for some time musing on the candlestick and olive-trees; and that he had ended his meditations in time to cast his eyes on the symbol now produced, without having his attention summoned to it by the angel. The object which presented itself was a roll or volume, an emblem, which seems to be borrowed from the vision of Ezekiel, and has been adopted in that of St. John. The roll of Ezekiel was written within and without, all full of lamentation, and mourning, and woe, on account of the punishments about to overtake the transgressors of God's law; and the two rolls of St. John describe the enemies of God and denounce his judgements on them. This of Zechariah will appear to be of a like description. It was not brought in any one's hand, but came forwards expanded and flying; that is to say, it was suspended in the air and carried along by some invisible power. Yet its motion was not so quick, as to prevent the prophet from taking accurate notice of its shape and size; or perhaps it stopped before him, to allow him time to examine it, as to those externals. At the same time, it seems to

have been borne so high or at such a distance, that he could not read it, since the angel declares the general nature of its contents, of which its magnitude denotes the number and perhaps also the importance.

2. And he said unto me, "What seest thou?"

And I said, "I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits."

The dimensions, which Zechariah states with so much precision, it is probable, were merely matter of conjecture, unless he heard them mentioned, of which we are not informed. Certainly we have no reason to think, that he ascertained them by actual admeasurement. As the roll was suspended too high or at too great distance for its contents to be read, so there was nothing in its outward appearance, that could afford ground of conjecture, as to its signification; for the prophet was entirely indebted for his knowledge to the information of the angel; who considering the difficulty of the subject waited not for the prophet's usual question, "what is this my Lord?" but proceeded at once to explain the symbol.

3. Then said he to me, "This is the curse, which is going forth over the face of the whole land. Because every one that stealeth,

pleadeth not guilty*, in this respect†, according to it‡; and every one that sweareth, pleadeth not guilty, in that respect, according 4. to it. I have brought it forth, saith Jehovah of hosts, that it may enter into the house

* The verb נקא signifies to be clean or clear; and when applied to moral guilt, to be innocent or not guilty. Having this signification in Kal, when used in Niphal, in which form it is chiefly found in the old testament, it signifies, to be made or found not guilty, or to be treated as such. But the form Niphal, it is well known, has very often a reflective signification, and hence the word signifies to make oneself not guilty, i. e. to assert one's innocence, or plead not guilty. In this sense I believe it to be used here; and I can support myself by the authority of Buxtorf, in his Lexicon, "Innocentem agit, vel asserit se. Zec. v. 3;" to which Montaldi, the Roman editor, adds in explanation; "factum videlicet suum pessimum excusat." In Jud. xv. 3, Sampson, when about to revenge himself, by burning the standing corn of the Philistines, says בְּלִפְתָּי אֶקְרִי חֲמָם "Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines," English version; or, as the words are rendered in the margin, "Now shalt I be blameless from the Philistines." But he must have been well aware that the Philistines would not so speedily acquit him upon the plea of retaliation, however just in itself, or in his own view of it. The meaning is; Now have I cleared myself from the Philistines; or, I pronounce myself not guilty of any injustice towards them, though I do, or am going to do, them a great injury. The word seems to be used in the same sense in Numbers, v. 19, and Psalm, xix. 13.

† The Hebrew phrase מן מן is used to denote distinction between several subjects of whatever kind they may happen to be, as this man and that man, part, side, place, respect; or one and another.

‡ Dr. Blaney for בְּמִן נִקָּה reads בְּמִן וְנִקָּה, whence he deduces his new rendering; "Because on the one hand every one that stealeth, is as he that is guiltless, and on the other

of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name, and abide in the midst of his house, and consume it, both the timber thereof and the stones thereof."

The curse is used as a noun of multitude ; for the collection or body of curses threatened against and deservedly inflicted on the violators of God's law. The thief and perjured person are only two particular instances, selected from the first and second tables of the law, for the purpose of exemplifying the general rule. As specimens, the two crimes are well chosen. Theft, comprising all forms of dishonesty, bespeaks a man regardless of his duty to his neighbour ; wilful perjury, the ne plus ultra of profaneness, exhibits him equally insensible of his duty to God. When these are combined, as they are here, with a real or pretended insensibility to his sins, they plainly mark out an offender hardened in guilt, shut up to the sense of it, and confirmed in a truly reprobate state of mind.

hand every one that sweareth, is as he that is guiltless ;" which he interprets thus ; " that the good and the bad, the innocent and the guilty, were in every part of the land looked upon and treated alike ; so that it was time for the divine justice to interpose, and make the proper distinction between them." But in order to express that meaning the prophet, I apprehend, would have written כָּל־אִישׁ. None of the ancient versions agree with him. The Vulgate has, sicut ibi scriptum est. The LXX have, *ὡς ὁ δαυαρ*, as if they had read כָּל־אִישׁ, in which the Arabic concurs. The Syriac agrees with the printed Hebrew text.

The curse is to be referred to some passages in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy*, in which the Lord, asserting himself to be the actual ruler and disposer, as well as the creator and rightful owner of all things, declares the terrors of his wrath, and represents the whole creation, as the instruments of his vengeance against the transgressors of his law. The precepts of the law, though limited to two short tables in their general and comprehensive expression, are numerous and very extensive in their detail and spiritual application; not only controuling the outward deeds and audible words of men, but penetrating inwardly to the silent recesses of the heart and of the will, and regulating the conduct of the inner, not less than of the outer man. The denunciations of the divine wrath are co-extensive with the law itself, and are determined to every breach thereof, according to that comprehensive formula, "cursed be he, which confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them†." Hence it is, that the roll appeared of so enormous a size‡, like a black

* Leviticus, xxvi. 14, and following, Deut. xi. 26—29, xxvii. 14, and following, xxviii. 15, and following.

† Deut. xxvii. 26.

‡ It has been remarked, that the dimensions of the roll accurately correspond to those of the porch of Solomon's temple, described in 1 Kings, vi. 3. But I see not that any thing can be gathered from the remark.

cloud floating in the air and fraught with the indignation of the Almighty.

It is said to go "over the face of the whole earth," or rather land ; for by the whole earth is meant not the terrestrial globe, but Christendom, or the Roman empire, the seat of the people professing the christian religion. It is called the earth by way of eminence, as being that portion of it, which is distinguished, as the allotted residence of the people of God. This sense of the word, is analogous to that, in which it is often used in the old testament, to signify that part of the world, which God was pleased to denominate especially his own, and which he appointed for the inheritance of his people Israel. Hence, when the Israelites ceased to be the peculiar people of God, and christians were elected into their room, the territory inhabited by them, or Christendom, would properly succeed to the same appellation ; and it is accordingly so denominated here and in other parts of the prophetic writings. But there is another reason for giving this appellation to the Roman empire. In the prophet Daniel any one of the four great empires is treated as universal. Speaking to Nebuchadnezzar, the prophet tells him, that he is "a king of kings ; and that wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of

the heaven hath God given into his hand and hath made him ruler over all*." Afterwards it is said of the Persian empire, that it shall bear rule over all the earth; and then of the fourth kingdom, or Roman empire, it is predicted, that it shall "subdue all these†;" and consequently must become, like any one of the others, an universal empire. In Nebuchadnezzar's second dream also, a similar description of universality is given to the Babylonian empire; and in the vision of the four beasts, the fourth kingdom, or Roman empire, is said to "devour the whole earth and to tread it down and to break it in pieces‡." With this prophetic style of speaking, that in use among the Romans concerning their empire entirely agrees. They affected to call it the world, the globe of earth; and St. Luke accordingly describes it, as the whole world. When the Roman empire became christian, both the above mentioned reasons for the appellation were united; the Roman world was made the territory of the people of God.

The reason assigned for the curse going forth is the guilt of the people of the land, the immorality and profaneness of christians, and that

* Daniel, ii. 37, 38.

† Daniel, iv. 11, 12, 20, 21, 22.

‡ Daniel, vii. 23.

combined with hypocrisy and self-deceit; for though guilty of the most atrocious sins, as robbery and perjury, they lull their own accusing consciences to sleep, and both attempt to justify themselves and admit the justification of others upon false and groundless pretences. They plead not guilty in this or that respect, or upon this or that account, according to the roll; that is, according to the erroneous and perverse interpretation, which they put upon the terms of the law and the condition of the curse.

It is necessary in a matter of such importance to state some instances of the various ways, in which christians are deceived, or deceive themselves and others.

1. When entirely absorbed by worldly occupations or pleasurable pursuits, they live with so little reflection on their own course of life and so little attention to the word of God, that they transgress both the letter and the spirit of the law, without consciousness of the transgression. By habitual carelessness the understanding is darkened and the heart hardened. Their dishonest gains, their carnal vices, and their profane conversation give them no uneasiness, produce no self-condemnation. They plead not guilty to their violations of the statute, by shutting their eyes to the meaning of it.

2. When christians plead their observance of one part of the law, which they suppose to be of the greatest importance, in excuse or in mitigation of their breach of another commandment, which they imagine to be of inferior obligation. This plea is of ancient date. The reader will readily call to mind the admonition of St. James* against it; but notwithstanding the apostolic warning the delusion is still practised.

3. The next mode, in which christians have been persuaded to excuse or justify themselves in sinful acts or ways of living, is by the perversion of scripture and scripture doctrines. This began in the earliest times of the church, and seems to have arisen from an erroneous notion of christian liberty, which was abused and perverted into a plea for an abandoned licentiousness. The persons, who maintained and pursued such pernicious opinions and practices, are stigmatized by St. Peter and St. Jude†, as followers of the oldest and greatest of sinners, especially of Balaam, by whose crafty counsels the Moabites were instructed to corrupt the children of Israel; and our blessed Lord himself‡, with a mystical

* James, ii. 10.

† 2 Peter, ii. 15, Jude, 11.

‡ Revelation, ii. 6, 15. *Νικολαος* is a name of like signification in the Greek to *נִכְלָאֵס* in the Hebrew tongue; and

allusion to that prophet's name, calls them Nicolaitans. A similar charge is brought by the fathers against several of the Gnostic sects; and although it might not justly lie against the founders of those sects, or against those who understood and taught their systems in their proper sense and spirit, yet the doctrines themselves are so obviously liable to be misunderstood and perverted by men of a certain turn of mind, temper, and constitution, that in all probability a large body of their disciples were justly chargeable with the greatest and foulest enormities, in which they justified themselves by pleading their erroneous doctrines*. These persons broke God's law upon system in different parts, and yet pleaded not guilty according to it.

4. The delusions of popery have, it is feared, brought many christians under the power of this curse. The absolutions, dispensations, and indulgences, which the Pope of Rome and his clergy have granted as rewards for services and

seems to have been compounded in order to express mystically those, who might be said to teach the doctrines, or follow the example of Balaam. Vitringa, *Observationes sacræ*, lib. 4, cap. 9. p. 1002. Ejusdem *Anacrisis Apocalypsios*, p. 65. Schleusneri *Lexicon novi testamenti in Νικολαιτης and Βαλααμ*.

* This is the opinion of Mosheim. *De rebus christianorum ante Constantinum magnum*, p. 357, 367, 368. et seq.

sold for money, were calculated to make the receivers and buyers plead not guilty to violations of the divine law, in which perhaps they passed their lives. The fact* of such enticements to profligacy and such encouragements in impenitence being held out by the Romish church is notorious and undeniable; nor is it less certain that they have been subjects of traffic and means of gain to the apostolic sect. There is no need to dwell at length on so plain an instance of christians bringing themselves under the terms of the curse here denounced. I forbear to bring forward others.

5. There is also an opinion obscurely held and timidly avowed, which, by weakening the faith of christians, renders them irresolute, and from irresolute, careless, and from careless, sinful; namely, that the code of christian morality is too pure and refined for men, in their present state of being and in the present frame of society;

* See the collection of indulgencies in Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation, vol. 2. Collection of Records, p. 160.

† The table of Impositions "was published in 1763, by Anthony Egane, a converted Franciscan friar, who had been the Pope's apostolical penitentiary or confessor general" in Ireland, and was of course well acquainted with the truth. It was republished in 1809 by Baron Maseres in his occasional essays. Extracts of it may be seen in Dr. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. 2, p. 1020.

that it must be intended for the regulation of men's conduct in a holier and happier state of existence; and, consequently, that such relaxations may be presumed and must be permitted in it, as will reduce it to a really practicable rule of conduct, consistent with the physical appetites, the external circumstances, and the ordinary habits of civilized and social man. I need not say that the notion is destitute of all foundation in the word of God; but the bare wish that it may have any, is able to give it sufficient authority in the minds of some persons to silence their consciences, under the violation of God's moral laws.

6. In opposing the popish doctrine of the merit of good works, some zealous votaries of the reformation carried the opposite one of imputed righteousness to the extreme of Antinomianism. At this day an opinion is said to be professed by some congregations in the church of England, as well as among the dissenters, that persons, justified in the eternal purpose of God by faith in Jesus Christ, are not accountable for any sins, or rather cannot be said to commit any, the perfect righteousness of Christ being personally imputed to them and considered, as that very holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. St. Paul indeed, in some passages of his

epistles, speaks of the law in terms, that seem degrading, and of christians, as being guided by some rule superior to it. But the apostle's meaning is, not that such persons are absolved from the restraint, but that they do not need it. The word of Christ is deeply engrafted in them and bears its proper fruit; they are spiritually minded; they walk in the spirit; they have their affections fixed on things above; the love of God in Jesus Christ is the principle and main spring of their actions; they go on from faith to faith; they are transformed by the renewing of their minds, are changed into the same image (the image of the Lord) from glory to glory. In such a frame of mind under such holy and heavenly influences, they live in a state of moral purity, against which there is no law, against which no penalty is denounced. The law is neither a restraining nor an impelling rule to them; they act from higher motives than the dread of God's curse, by paying him the voluntary obedience of dutiful and loving children; so far from making void the law through faith, they through faith establish and fulfil the law. Such persons of course have not and cannot have the least occasion to justify and excuse themselves in the breach of God's law, or to plead not guilty to violations of it, which they have

not committed; on the ground that the law in respect to themselves is a dead letter, a repealed and abrogated code; from all obligation, to which they are exempted by the free grace of God. No two things can be more different; no two cases can be more directly opposite, than that of him, who pleads a false excuse for sin, and his, who needs no such plea at all.

Not that St. Paul supposes, or that christians themselves can suppose, that they have attained to a state of perfection. The best christians have reason to confess and deplore their manifold errors, negligences, inadvertences, ignorances, and sins, into which from time to time they fall, when for a moment the shield of faith is laid aside, or the sword of the spirit dropped from the hand. The expressions of the interpreting angel plainly imply, that the curse of God is not pronounced, does not light, on those, "who meekly acknowledge their vileness and truly repent them of their faults;" but on those, who, either in hypocrisy deceiving others, or on false pretences and hollow grounds deceiving themselves, plead not guilty to offences against the law, which they have committed, and perhaps are actually in the habit of committing. Such pleas darken the understanding, harden the heart, prevent repentance, falsify confession,

and therefore justly bring down the heavier curse.

Other instances might be stated of the casuistries and spiritual trickeries, by which men impose upon themselves or others, lessening in their apprehensions the malignity and baseness of sin, and cutting down their vices to their consciences, or stretching their consciences to the size of their vices. Unhappily the church of Christ has at all periods answered more or less to the description afforded of it in the two parables of the tares of the field and of the fishes taken in the net. The apostles themselves in their epistles plainly shew, that in the primitive times it was not entirely free from such pollutions, and some of the early heresies, as it appears from what has been said above, were too favourable to self deception to have failed of producing immoral conduct. But the emblem of the flying roll cannot be justly applied to a state of things, in which moral corruption was discovered merely in partial exceptions to the general character of a virtuous age, or in the maintenance of erroneous opinions. Its going forth must be dated from a period, when the church in general shewed signs, that it had received a vicious taint, and declining from the pure morality and religious simplicity of the apostolic age, went on to

degenerate by successive, but continual steps, into unjust, insincere, unholy, and profane practices.

We should however be doing great wrong to the catholic church at any period prior to the fifth century, if we were to impute its altered character merely, or even chiefly, to an actual and general, though gradual, declension of its own members from rectitude of conduct. Another, and that a more powerful cause was mainly concerned in producing that effect.

So long as the church continued in a state of actual or even of impending and threatened persecution, it possessed no attractions for those, who were governed by secular interests, or who regarded its doctrines, merely as one set among others of conflicting opinions. Its members were therefore sincere, faithful, and, except where error opened the door to depravity, of course pious and moral. But it was otherwise when the affairs of christians took a prosperous turn. Then the worldly minded and venal found an interest, and the superficial and disputatious a pleasure, in enrolling their names among the members of Christ. Then, since like the darnel in the wheat-field or the bad fish in the net, they could not for the present be separated from the pure and virtuous; they imparted their own

character and colour to the society of christians, in a degree perhaps more than equal to the proportion, which their numbers bare to the whole community. This was too much the case even in those intervals of peace and prosperity, which the church enjoyed in the third century. Origen, in his commentary on St. Matthew's gospel, vehemently upbraids the conduct of a portion of the clergy, as avaricious, ambitious, tyrannical, and irreligious persons. When the clergy were of such a character, we cannot expect to find the fruits of pure religion in the laity; and lest we should form such an erroneous expectation, the same father compares those, who appointed the christian ministers to their offices, that is to say, the members in general of the churches, where such ministers were found, (for in those days, both bishops and presbyters were usually elected by their congregations*,) to the persons, who bought and sold doves in the temple of Jerusalem†. Cyprian also, after the thirty eight years of peace, which the christians enjoyed from the reign of Severus to that of Decius, arraigns with great boldness and zeal the vices of the age, and attributes the late persecutions to divine judgements on the previous laxity of moral and religious principle.

* Bingham's antiquities of the christian church; b. 4, c. 2.

† Comment. de iis qui templo ejecti sunt, p. 442. Ed. Huet.

"The Lord," says he, "would have his household proved, and because a long state of peace had corrupted the discipline delivered to us from on high, the heavenly chastisement stirred up our supine, and, I had almost said, dormant, faith: and when we merited a severer punishment for our sins, the most merciful Lord so ordered all things, that whatsoever took place seemed rather a trial than a persecution*." Then he goes on to specify among other things, the covetousness and insatiable eagerness, with which some were bent on enlarging their fortunes, the want of true religion in the clergy, the fraudulent practices contrived to take in the unwary, and the rash oaths, yea in some instances the perjuries, into which they fell.

Eusebius also, at the beginning of the eighth book of his ecclesiastical history, in which he relates the persecutions under the emperor Diocletian, and his colleagues and successors, does not scruple to assert, that the vices of christians, consequent on the freedom they had lately enjoyed, their vanity and sloth, their mutual envy and detraction, the dissensions of the ecclesiastical rulers, and the tumults of the people, with hypocrisy and dissimulation carried to the highest pitch, were the causes that provoked the divine

* Cyprianus de lapsis, p. 88. Ed. Fell.

judgements to fall upon them. He observes, that at first these were inflicted in mild and moderate measure; but upon the continuance and increase of their disorderly, obstinate, and rebellious conduct, especially that of the higher orders of the clergy, contending with each other for higher powers and wider rule, as if they laid claim to temporal principalities, those judgements fell with such a degree of rigour and destructive effect, as might well justify the application of Jeremiah's calamitous predictions concerning Jerusalem to the church of Christ.

Some deductions probably ought to be made, conformably to the remark of Mosheim*, from these lamentable views of the laxity and depravation of christian morals in general and of the manners of the clergy in particular, and carried to the account of rhetorical exaggeration, arising from those acute and exasperated feelings, with which men zealously affected in the good cause of religion are wont to regard and to describe, though without intending to indulge in acrimonious declamation, those aberrations from rectitude, which degrade its sacred character in the eyes of the world. Yet it should be remembered that in two places of the eighth book of

* De rebus christianorum ante Constantinum magnum, p. 598.

his history, Eusebius has plainly declared, that he did not enter into so full an account, as he might have done, of the enormities of christians and of the christian clergy, because it was equally repugnant to his feelings and foreign from his design*.

Great occasion also was given to scandal, and doubtless no small opportunity to vice, when many of the clergy, at once desiring to obtain that credit†, which from superstitious notions began to be attributed to a state of clerical celibacy, and unwilling to give up the gratifications of a married life, admitted virgins bound by vows of perpetual chastity to the participation of their homes, their tables, and beds. Those virgins indeed and the clergy with whom they cohabited, alike protested, that nothing took place in this commerce, but what was agreeable to the strict rule of chastity; but such protestations would pass for little with those, who knew the power of temptation and the folly and danger of entering

* Hist. Eccl. lib. 8, c. 2, et supplem. de martyribus Palæstinæ, c. 12.

† Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Cent. 3, part 2, § 6. Dodwelli dissertatio Cyprianica tertia. Suiceri Thesaurus Ecclesiasticus in v. Συνησακτος. Some of the offenders had the impudence to allege in their excuse the example of the apostle John in taking the mother of Jesus to his own home. Θεομητορα παρθενον ελαβεν εις τα ιδια. Epiphanius, quoted by Suicer.

into it. Accordingly the practice was vigorously opposed and condemned by bishops and councils; but as those things have the most powerful influence, which are agreeable to human nature, it required a long time to overcome and eradicate it*.

If the precarious intervals of peace and prosperity, which the christian church enjoyed before the elevation of Constantine the great, were thus productive of numerous depravations and corruptions in morals, much more likely was such an effect to be produced by its elevation to temporal grandeur and dominion after that event. There is no need to enlarge in this place on the common consequences of success, wealth, and power. That the morals of christians did undergo a great and rapid alteration for the worse after the establishment of their religion by Constantine, cannot be denied†. But this alteration is to be attributed in a great measure to the cause before mentioned, the influx into the church of unprincipled and worthless persons, who from the various views of worldly interest,

* *Ut potentissima solent esse, quæ naturæ humanæ favent, neque hoc (tertio sc.) neque sequenti sæculo expugnari plane poterat. Mosheim de rebus christianorum ante Constantinum magnum, p. 598.*

† Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Cent. 4, part, 2, c. 3, § 17. Venema Hist. Eccl. sec. 4, p. 260—269; and the numerous authorities there cited.

assumed the name and observed the rites of christians, while they remained infidel in heart and prone to every kind of vice. The kindness and unsuspecting sincerity of the emperor, as Eusebius tells us*, surrounded him with men, who took advantage of his virtues and abused his liberality. But it is also evident, that as a politician he desired to strengthen his government and his empire, by uniting his subjects in one profession and form of religion and religious worship; whence he was not only the more readily satisfied with an outward conformity, but was induced, in order to recommend christianity to the Pagans, to copy into its external forms some of the ornamental parts of their ceremonial.

Nor were other causes and means of corruption wanting. The uncommanded austerities of the Ascetics, the fanatical and almost delirious extravagances of the Monks, the contentions of opposite sects, the honours paid to the memory of martyrs, the fictitious miracles, the pilgrimages†, the arts and briberies, the struggles and violences, which often attended the election of

* De vita Constantini, lib. 4, c. 54.

† Constantine himself, in the near view of his approaching end, declared to the Bishops, whom he had assembled to baptize him, that it had been his hope and intention to

bishops; all these things, which either took their rise, or acquired force and establishment, about this period, contributed in various ways and degrees to vitiate and corrupt the morals of christians*.

receive that sacrament in the waters of the river Jordan, in which our Saviour himself for our example is recorded to have partaken of the sacred rite. Eusebius, de vita Constantini, lib. 4. c. 62. This piece of superstition, without the necessity of supposing other motives, accounts for the long delay of the first christian emperor's baptism.

* From any thing said above, I hope it will not be supposed, that I am in any degree hostile to a legal establishment of christianity, and consequently of some particular form of it. It is the duty of christian governors to provide for their subjects sufficient opportunities of being instructed and trained up, and afterwards of living and abiding, in those religious principles and in that form of worship and order of discipline, which themselves believe to be right; and this cannot be done without a religious establishment, nor without confining their direct support and favour to that alone. But Constantine went too far and interfered too much. Hence probably it is, that some writers are inclined to attribute a much greater share in producing the relaxation of christian morals in the fourth century to the establishment afforded to christianity by Constantine, than can be fairly imputed to it. Even from the few citations above made, it has appeared, that the mere safety, prosperity, and wealth of christians, without any legal establishment of their religion, were capable of producing that effect in so great a degree, that it is extremely difficult to say, how much of it in the fourth century is to be ascribed to that circumstance separately. The other causes of decline also, that were then at work, are fully adequate to account for the farther deterioration which ensued, without insisting so much on the influence of one, which cannot be estimated apart from the mere protection, safety, and wealth of the christian community.

To this decline then of that strict morality and genuine piety, which are inculcated by the word of God, and which had hitherto, with some exceptions as to particular persons, sects, and short periods, been the general practice and formed the general character of christians, we may refer the date of the going forth of the flying roll. Its admonitions, warnings, and threatenings then became greatly needed. But unhappily they were disregarded. Christians maintained, and persisted in maintaining, their religious profession and in asserting their claim to the blessings of the gospel, as members of the church of Christ, whose lives, instead of exhibiting the pure and lively image of the truth, like the lamps of a candlestick shining to the world, were deformed and blackened by falsehood, deception, injustice, extortion, and every kind of vice. From that time to this the terrible denunciations of the flying roll have not ceased to go forth. They are continually sounded in the ears of the hypocritical, self deceiving, and careless. But since they often hear them without self application or repentance, the curse enters in and rests upon them in all its calamitous efficacy.

“That it may enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name, and it shall abide in the midst of

his house, and shall consume it, with the timbers thereof and the stones thereof." The curse is represented as both abiding and penetrating; as pursuing the sinner into his retirements, laying waste and destroying every portion of his substance, the most precious and the most durable; and bringing also his family to ruin. In like manner, the psalmist represents the curse of divine wrath; as piercing to the innermost parts of the man, who profanely flings about him the maledictions of his malignity. "It shall come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones*." But the full force and extent of the curse here denounced, are to be learned from the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy†, in which the vengeance appointed to overtake the transgressors of the divine law, is set forth in a most terrific enumeration of corporeal and temporal evils. Jehovah there asserts his right and his power, as the creator, owner, and ruler of all things, and summons the whole circle of his works as the ministers and instruments of his terrible displeasure. Sinful people are threatened with unfruitful seasons and famine, with fevers,

* Psalm, cix. 18.

† Leviticus, xxvi. 14, and following verses, Deuteronomy, xi. 26—29, xxvii. 14, and following verses, xxviii. 15, and following verses.

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agues, and pestilences; with ulcers and all manner of diseases; with weakness of body and failure of children; with perpetual disappointment and doubtfulness, perturbation and terror of heart; with wild beasts and locusts; with wars and sieges, discomfitures and conquests; with captivity, scattering, and exile; and in short, with every molestation, affliction, and variety of ruin, that can befall men, whether as individuals, or as a people. By these means "the lamp of the wicked will be put out*;" "the candlestick of the faithless and impenitent people will be removed†;" the fruitless branches will be lopped off from the vine and cast forth to the burning‡. At the same time it is to be carefully and feelingly remembered, that the earthly curses recorded in the old testament, are only the figures of the future penalties, which await the sinner in those unseen and terrible abodes, "where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched."

* Proverbs, xiii. 9.

† Revelation, ii. 5.

‡ John, xv. 2, 6.

PART VII.

CAP. V. 5—11.

CORRUPTION of religious principle seldom or never fails to follow close upon immoral practice. Having declined from the path of virtuous and holy living, into the various kinds and degrees of dishonesty and profaneness, christians went on in the natural progress of degeneracy, and fell into sins more immediately affecting the character of their religion, and the worship and honour of God. These are represented in the next part of the vision.

5. Then the angel that talked with me went forth;

Or rather, went forward; for it is certain that he did not quit Zechariah, or remove far from him, since he still continued conversing with him and explained the ensuing symbols. He only went on, or moved forward, a short space, to meet the object presented to the prophet's

view, and to be ready at hand to do the acts, which, in the eighth verse, he is related to perform.

And said unto me, "Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this, which is going forth."

6. And I said, "What is it?" And he said, "This is the ephah which is going forth."

The ephah was an Hebrew measure of capacity, containing something less than a Winchester bushel, with which, and with its uses, the prophet must have been well acquainted. The vessel however, which was here exhibited to him, it is certain from what follows, was of much greater size than a common ephah; yet being of the same shape and external appearance, perhaps also appearing to be of the same materials, as an ephah was usually made of, it is called by the same name. The angel himself distinguishes it from a common ephah by the use of the emphatic article; "This is **THE** ephah;" not any ephah, but that which goeth forth. If it be asked, whither does the ephah go? We may answer, over the face of all the land, over all Christendom; for those words are to be collected and understood from the description of the flying roll in the former part. That it does indeed so go forth, is plain, from the following words of the angel: "for having, as we may reasonably

suppose, allowed Zechariah a short time to contemplate the object before him,

He said moreover, "This is their eye* in all 7. the land; and behold the cake of lead lifted up, and this†, one woman sitting in the midst of the ephah."

The eye in Hebrew is sometimes, though not commonly, used for the aspect, colour, or surface of any object. In Exodus, x. 5, it is applied to the surface of the ground; in Numbers,

* The note being too long to be inserted here is placed at the end of this part.

† The word עֵינָא is rejected by Archbishop Newcome and Dr. Blaney upon the authority of one manuscript; and עֵינָא admitted in its stead, on the authority of the Vulgate, Septuagint, and Arabic versions. The alteration rests on very infirm foundations; for the manuscript certainly does not read עֵינָא; and it is very possible that the authors of the versions may have read עֵינָא, though they have not rendered it literally. For since they supposed the words of the angel to end with the sixth verse, they could not give to this a literal rendering without losing hold, and almost sight, of all meaning. They therefore, in its stead, repeated from the beginning of the verse the word "behold;" by which they did not alter, nor much obscure, the meaning of the passage, except so far as that effect has followed from breaking off the angel's speech. This indeed is the sole cause of all the difficulty attending the word עֵינָא; for supposing the seventh verse to be spoken by the angel, it can no longer be objected, that a talent of lead is said to be a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah, and upon whom the talent was afterwards cast, which seems to be the reason with Dr. Blaney, for receiving the reading, of the three versions, to which however, it must be observed, that the Syriac affords no countenance.

xi. 7, the eye, or colour, of manna is compared to the eye, or colour, of bdellium : and in Ezekiel, i. 7, the sparkling appearance of the cherubim, to the eye, or colour, of burnished brass. All the three are evidently cases of metonymy, the eye being put for that, which the eye beholds. In the passage before us this sense of the word is transferred, by an easy metaphor, to that, which the understanding, the eye of the mind, discerns in surveying mankind ; and it is probably this double process by metonymy and by metaphor, which has cast such a difficulty on the word, that the sense has escaped the notice of copyists, translators, and commentators. That, which the understanding discerns in surveying mankind, is their character, moral, political, or religious. Here, in conformity with the general purport and tendency of the vision, religious character is doubtless the thing alluded to. No grammatical difficulty can arise from the want of an antecedent to the possessive pronoun "their." It plainly and necessarily refers to the people, who are in possession of the land, that is, of Christendom*, or the Roman empire, then christian. This was so clearly seen by the author of the Syriac version, that he has expressed the antecedent instead of the possessive pronoun,

* See Commentary, p. 302.

An ephah is merely a measure of capacity, and therefore, as in reality, so in vision, is not by itself a matter of any value or importance; but must derive its whole significance and consequence from its contents. It is in allusion to these, that it is here distinguished as **THE** ephah. The eye, therefore, the aspect, resemblance, character of the people of Christendom must be determined by whatever the ephah may be found to contain. Accordingly this is next exhibited. The angel, as he continued his discourse, (for the following words are to be taken as a part, not of Zechariah's narrative, but of the angel's speech,) accompanied it by a correspondent action. Lifting up the lid or cover of the ephah, which, we are told, was a cake of lead; "behold," said he, "the cake of lead* lifted up, and this, one woman, sitting in the midst of the ephah."

The inclosure of the woman within the ephah

* Our English version renders the word טלית, a talent, as it frequently signifies; and hence Archbishop Newcome observes, that the lid of the ephah weighed three thousand shekels, or fifteen hundred ounces. But the Hebrew word properly signifies a round flat cake; and it probably came to signify a talent from that weight being usually made in a flat round form. It is more likely to be used here in its primitive sense to denote a piece of lead, of a proper size and shape to be the cover of the ephah. A leaden cover for so large a vessel, as this ephah must have been, would greatly exceed the weight of a talent, taken at its largest estimation.

must denote either confinement or concealment. But the ephah is said to go forth, and that, as we have seen, over all the land, throughout the Roman empire; and the woman contained within it was able, as plainly appears, to act with such efficacy, as to impart her own character to the people of the land. Confinement therefore cannot be the thing intended by her inclosure. It must consequently be intended to signify concealment. But the ephah, in which the woman is contained, denotes, as we have before seen, the general character of the people of Christendom; and that being expressed by the word "eye," denotes, as we have also seen, that it was visible or plainly intelligible. Here, it may be thought, is some inconsistency. But it is only a seeming one. The ephah, representing the eye, the religious character of christians, was open and visible; the woman only, that which imparts the character, was concealed. By their failure of perceiving her, it is signified, that christians were unconscious of their own real character, while it was apparent enough to all impartial and sagacious observers. They are represented then, as persons, in some manner, or measure, deluded and imposed upon, and ignorant of the light, in which they appeared in the eyes of God and of them, who could perceive the truth.

The angel having, as he had done in the last scene, allowed the prophet a short space to contemplate the object before him, proceeded to explain its signification in two words, accompanied again by a significant action.

8. Moreover he said, "This is wickedness." And he threw her down in the midst of the ephah.

In the sixth part of the vision, the general immorality and profaneness of christians are instanced in the two particular crimes of theft and perjury. It will hardly be said, that the general disregard and violation of the two tables of God's law, could be more strongly exemplified in any other instances; or that any emblem, more expressive than the enormous flying roll, could be found to exhibit the malignity of the guilt and the severity of its punishment. Consequently, when we find in this part the religious character of christians in general imparted to them by a woman, who is declared to be wickedness itself, it may be certainly presumed, that the sin signified thereby is not only of a different kind from the foregoing, but fit to be distinguished, as "the wickedness," bearing the generic for a specific name, as being "raised to that bad eminence" by its peculiar atrocity. The crime is beyond all question, idolatry, involving the breach of both the first and second commandments; a

crime, which strikes so directly at the honour of God, and at the basis of man's obligation to obedience, as to merit the distinguished place assigned to it by the holy scriptures, in the catalogue of human enormities. St. Paul* dwells at length on the extreme folly, perverseness, and blackness of the crime, and invests it with a peculiar and transcendent horror, as the mistress and mother of injustice, impurity, and every foul abomination. The author of the apocryphal book of wisdom† had preceded the apostle herein, collecting his materials and forming his judgement from an extensive knowledge and comprehensive view of ancient history.

It must be confessed indeed, that no other passage can be produced from the old testament, in which the same Hebrew word‡ is found, as it is here; having the emphatic article prefixed, and used in the same sense. But there are many, in which an equivalent term ||, having that article prefixed, is specifically and in the same sense applied to idolatry. The word so used is rendered by our translators, sometimes, "evil," and sometimes, "wickedness," as they have rendered the word here, without directing the notice of the

* Romans, i. 21—32.

† Wisdom of Solomon, 14. 21—31.

‡ ארשע

|| רע

English reader to the article. The fourth chapter of Deuteronomy contains a discourse of Moses, in which he has handled the subject separately and at great length. In the twenty fifth verse he stigmatizes idolatry, as being especially the evil, or that evil; "When ye shall corrupt yourselves and make a graven image, the likeness of any thing, and do the evil, or wickedness, in the sight of the Lord thy God." Again, in Deuteronomy, xvii, he repeats the divine law; "If there be found among you man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness," properly, the wickedness, or that wickedness, "in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his covenant;" and then idolatry is immediately assigned, as the specific sin signified by "the wickedness." So in 1 Kings, xvi. 30, it is said of Ahab, that "he did evil;" literally, the evil or wickedness; (the same Hebrew word is used here as in the before cited texts;) which is immediately explained by his idolatry. Of him again it is said, in 1 Kings, xxi. 25, that "he sold himself to work wickedness;" literally, the wickedness; which immediately after is specified to be idolatry. The last instance, which I shall produce, is from 2 Kings, xxi. 6, where Manasseh is said to have "wrought much wickedness;" literally, he multiplied or magnified to do the wickedness;

which, from the foregoing and following words, evidently appears to be idolatry.

But the woman, as we have seen, lay hid in the ephah, whereby we must understand, according to what has been said, that the idolatry of the christian world would, in some measure or other be concealed; that is to say, would be practised unconsciously, or at least would be denied to be what it was. It would be defended by such specious arguments, as would delude the understanding of its votaries, and make their consciences easy, under the habitual commission of the crime; as in the sixth part, the sinners against the third and eighth commandments are represented pleading not guilty.

The admiration and reverence, with which christians regarded the memory of martyrs and saints, began at an early period to exceed the bounds of propriety and discretion. In the course of time, and as christians increased in wealth, magnificent churches were erected upon the spots, where they had suffered; and it was esteemed a great addition to the sanctity of the house of God himself, if their bodies, or a portion only of their relics, could be treasured up within its walls. On such places, it was supposed, that God looked down with peculiar favour; there he was most accessible; the prayers

offered there were most acceptable to him. Such practices could not fail to be accompanied with a high opinion of the merits of the saints, which begat a notion that they might be considered as favoured intercessors with God ; and that again introduced the practice of beseeching and imploring their intercession, as persons, that could hear and notice the petitions, which in various places were offered to them. But above all, the virgin Mary, to whom the unwarranted and erroneous title of mother of God was early attributed, was considered and invoked, as the most powerful patroness and protectress of those, who through her approached her divine son ; and such language was used of her and addressed to her, as plainly put her on the footing of a goddess. Thus was the true and only mediator, the divine and human intercessor, defrauded of his rightful dignity ; and a host of inferior and tutelary deities, analogous to those worshipped by the heathen, received the adorations of christian votaries, with forms and ceremonies studiously conformed to the ancient ritual.

But the wickedness concealed itself, like the woman in the ephah. The light of truth, when once it shines in the mind of man, is too strong to be overpowered and darkened precipitately and at once. Accordingly, in this instance, the

eclipse took place gradually, though it advanced rapidly. Those who first erred, erred from mistaken zeal, from warm, but ill-regulated affection, and from a weak hope of more easily converting the Pagans, by exhibiting some conformity to their religion. They knew not what they did; at least they did not perceive its consequences. But when the unconscious error had become a sinful practice, and christians were warned by pious and judicious friends, or reproached by triumphant enemies, with their guilt and shame, concealment, not amendment, was resorted to; the actual commission of the sin was denied; and the denial was supported by distinctions, drawn between the higher acts of worship due to God alone, and the lower degrees of devotion, which it was contended might, without offence, be paid to the meritorious favourites of heaven. These distinctions of *latreia* and *douleia* were indeed unacknowledged by the commandment and utterly destitute of scriptural authority; but they bore some semblance of an answer to the objectors, and so were sufficient to delude the understanding, when the imagination and affections were already captivated, and to uphold the veil, which they could not originally have spread. Such apologies were worse than the sin; for although by the worship of

inferior mediators, the first commandment stood actually violated, yet by these vain, but bold pretences, put forward as the pleas and grounds for that violation, it was essentially abrogated, so far as concerns the conscience of the deluded worshippers. From the abrogation of the first, the path was neither long nor difficult to the breach of the second commandment. Pictures, afterwards statues, representing the objects of veneration and worship, being admitted into private oratories and public churches, soon began to receive the honours due to the originals. This practice, like the former, was defended by subtle distinctions and ingenious arguments, which, when once the spirit of delusion was raised, sufficed to keep it up, and to strengthen its influence in the minds of those, who were so willing to be deluded. There cannot be any necessity for dwelling at length on facts so well known. Let one citation from a master, though hostile, hand describe the state of christian worship in the beginning of the fifth century.

“If in the beginning of the fifth century,” says Mr. Gibbon*, “Tertullian or Lactantius had been suddenly raised from the dead, to assist at the festival of some popular saint or martyr, they would have gazed with astonishment and

* Decline and Fall, vol. 5, p. 123. 8vo. Ed.

indignation on the profane spectacle, which had succeeded to the pure and spiritual worship of a christian congregation. As soon as the doors of the church were thrown open, they must have been offended by the smoke of incense, the perfume of flowers, and the glare of lamps and tapers, which diffused at noon-day a gaudy, superfluous, and, in their opinion, a sacrilegious light. If they approached the balustrade of the altar, they made their way through the prostrate crowd, consisting, for the most part, of strangers and pilgrims, who resorted to the city at the vigil of the feast ; and who already felt the strong intoxication of fanaticism, and perhaps of wine. Their devout kisses were imprinted on the walls and pavement of the sacred edifice, and their fervent prayers were directed, whatever might be the language of their church, to the bones, the blood, or the ashes of the saint, which were usually concealed, by a linen or silken veil, from the eyes of the vulgar. The christians frequented the tombs of the martyrs, in the hope of obtaining, from their powerful intercession, every sort of spiritual, but more especially of temporal, blessings. They implored the preservation of their health, or the cure of their infirmities, the fruitfulness of their barren wives, or the safety and happiness of their children. Whenever they undertook

any distant or dangerous journey, they requested, that the holy martyrs would be their guides and protectors on the road, and if they returned, without having experienced any misfortune, they again hastened to the tombs of the martyrs, to celebrate, with grateful thanksgivings, their obligation to the memory and relics of those heavenly patrons. The walls were hung round with symbols of the favours, which they had received; eyes and hands and feet of gold and silver; and edifying pictures, which could not long escape the abuse of indiscreet or idolatrous devotion, represented the image, the attributes, and the miracles of the tutelar saint."

These corruptions of christianity and of christian worship continually acquired fresh strength, and extended themselves by degrees over the whole church; so that idolatry became "their eye," the general character of the people throughout the whole land of Christendom. "The use, and even the worship, of images," Mr Gibbon observes, "was firmly established before the end of the sixth century." But though openly practised, it was still not professed: it was not admitted to be what it really was. While christians repeated the harlotries of the daughter of Zion, they denied their infidelity; but in truth, while they boasted of their conquests

over heathens and heathenism, "the victors succumbed to the vanquished."

But the interpreting angel raised the cover of the ephah and disclosed to the prophet the woman sitting within ; and then having explained her to be the symbolical representation of that great wickedness, idolatry, "he threw her down in the midst of the ephah." Both the actions were emblematical, and denoted, that christians would not be permitted to proceed in their idolatries, without some warning ; nor their wickedness to pass without opposition, exposure, and refutation. This has been slightly noticed before. God never left himself without witness. There were some at all times found, who stripped off the disguises of christian idolatry, exhibiting it to the world in its true colours, adopting, as it were, the words of the angel, "THIS IS THE WICKEDNESS." Such in particular was Vigilantius, whom Mr. Gibbon calls "the protestant of his age." That pious presbyter strenuously opposed himself to the prevailing superstitions of the times. In particular he denied the efficacy and reality of the intercessions of the martyrs, he condemned the worship offered to them and the honours paid to their relics and tombs. He exposed to contempt the miracles related to have been performed there ; he censured the custom

of keeping vigils and burning tapers at them ; and followed so far the steps of Jovinian, in the preceding century, as to deny the peculiar merits of celibacy, fasting, and all the austerities of monachism. Vigilantius, it plainly appears, found many to favour his opinions and writings, among whom were several bishops, and even the bishop of the diocese in which he held his cure. Thus was the foul abomination of idolatry revealed to the eyes of the guilty church ; it was beaten down by the power of reason and truth.

But the angel, having disclosed and thrown down the fiend of idolatry, proceeded to perform another symbolical act. So the prophet informs us ;

And he cast the mass of lead upon the mouth thereof.

By thus replacing, as he probably did with a gesture of indignation, its weighty cover on the mouth of the ephah, the angel plainly intimated, that the wickedness, though it had been exposed and cast down, would not be cast out ; that it would still seek and find refuge in its disguises ; and that the great body of the christian church, deceived thereby, would still justly bear the character of idolatry. Accordingly we find, that the protestant of the fifth century, being attacked by Jerome, who gave him the

nickname of Dormitanti^{us}, with the utmost asperity of insult and brutality of invective, retired from the contest. It should seem, that in order to secure his peace, and perhaps his personal safety*, he retreated from "the good fight," good as it was, and left the wickedness, without farther molestation from him, to extend its influence and hide its deformity. Yet the harlot was destined to encounter other and clearer exposures of her infamy, with still sorer blows and deeper downfalls. In the eighth and ninth centuries the idolatry of the christian church, not only became the subject of debate, but was denounced and condemned by the highest temporal and spiritual authority; by the emperor of the east, and by a council assembled at Constantinople in the year 754. Six emperors in succession declared themselves against the wickedness, and turned the full force of imperial power toward the demolition of images and the extermination of image worship. Thus they realized the action of the angel, when he cast the woman down in the midst of the ephah. But in vain;

* In his epistle to Riparius, Jerome pretty clearly intimates how he would have his opponent served; *virga ferrea confringere vas inutile et tradere in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus fiat*. Hieronymi op. tom. 2, p. 120, Ed. Erasmi.

the mass of lead was replaced on its mouth. For though the church was for a long time divided between the hostile parties of the Iconoclasts and Iconoduli, the image-breakers and the image-worshippers, yet the latter, with the monks on their side and the pope at their head, proved too hard in the end for imperial power, even when engaged in the cause of reason and religion. Idolatry reassumed the undisputed sway, and extended by degrees her influence over the churches of Britain, France, and Germany, which though they had admitted images, for a long time refused them religious worship.

Still however the covering of the ephah was occasionally removed. The contests of the church of Rome with the Waldenses and Albigenses, and with the renowned precursors of the reformation, afforded to christians many a glimpse of their true circumstances and character; but despotic power, exerted in merciless persecutions, overwhelmed, though it could not entirely silence, the unanswerable reasonings and the indignant remonstrances of the advocates of truth, and still kept the veil close round the enchantress, by menacing with torments and death every one, who should attempt to pluck it off.

9. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and behold, two women came forth; and a wind

- was in her wings; for these had wings, like the wings of the stork; and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens.
10. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, "Whither are these *women* carrying the
11. ephah?" And he said unto me, "To build her an house in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, then shall she be made to rest there, according to that which is prepared for her."

As idolatry has been represented under the figure of a woman, so those who succeeded in removing the guilt and the opprobrium from the christian church and name, are also represented by women. They are two, not only in allusion to the number of witnesses required by the Mosaic law, to support a fact by their evidence; but because they represent the church, the **TRUE** church, composed, as we have before seen, of two principal branches, the Jewish and the Gentile. These bear continual testimony to the unity of the Godhead, in the persons of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and to the absolute and sole claims of the three divine persons, to receive religious worship, to the total exclusion of every created and inferior nature from any kind, or form, or degree thereof. Now, if we compare with this interpretation the

description given by St. John, in the eleventh chapter of his Revelation, of the congregation of faithful persons, whom he saw worshipping in the sanctuary of the temple, and who are distinctly styled, "the two witnesses of God," we can hardly doubt, that the two women are intended to represent the same persons; that is to say, the pure and undefiled church of God; both that part, which, before the reformation, had not been corrupted by idolatrous worship, and that, which upon the reformation taking place, put away THAT WICKEDNESS from the midst of her, and became, and still is, the PROTESTANT CHURCH.

The women are figured with wings, which bear them aloft above the earth, the region of darkness, idolatry, and tyranny, towards heaven, the proper dwelling of the true church, the habitation of spiritual light, truth, and goodness. "And a wind, or a spirit, was in their wings." This, as the order and connexion of the vision teaches us, must be one of the four winds, or spirits, introduced in the next ensuing scene, and indeed that one of them, to which is committed the guidance of the third chariot, and to the interpretation of which, therefore, I must refer for the exposition of the passage now before us. Their wings are said to be like those

of the stork ; partly, because the wings of a stork are large and strong, able to sustain a long and lofty flight ; but I believe, chiefly, with regard to the name of the bird ; for this, with no other difference but that of gender, is the same word, as that, which is commonly used to express persons, who are the objects of God's especial favour, "his saints," as the word is usually rendered in our English version.

"And they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven;" as if it had not belonged to either ; not to the earth*, because christian idolatry still retains the knowledge of the true God, and of salvation through Jesus Christ ; nor to heaven, because it is polluted with those abominations, which cannot have admission there

Upon the prophet requesting to be informed, "whither the women were carrying the ephah," the angel replied, that they were carrying it "to the land of Shinar;" that is, the territory of Babylon. Zechariah well knew from former prophecies, especially from those of Isaiah, and

* The meaning, here given to the word earth, is entirely analogous to that, which we often give to it in common talk ; the ground, in opposition to the heaven, or height above. I see no reasonable objection to the use of words, in the same diversity of signification, with respect to spiritual subjects, as they commonly bear with respect to corporeal and earthly subjects.

even from the foregoing scenes of his own vision, that at the time, to which this prediction extended, "the land of Shinar" would be a desolation; that Babylon would be no more a city, nor have any territory, subject to it, or dependent upon it. He must therefore have understood, that not the proper and earthly Babylon is here meant, but some other city, the head and metropolis of some other country; in short, a typical and prophetic Babylon, to which the cargo of idolatry was about to be conveyed. It is not however likely, that either the proper name, or exact position, of the city and region were revealed to the prophet. But we, taught, as well by posterior revelations, as by the grand interpreter of prophecy, the accomplishment of events accordingly, have better opportunities of ascertaining the mind of the prophetic spirit. Hence we learn with a certainty of conviction, on which fear, shame, self interest, folly, and vanity, weakly and vainly strive to throw a shadow of doubt, that PROPHE-
TIC BABYLON IS PAPAL ROME, and consequently, that "the land of Shinar" is the extensive territory, over which the papal monarchy extends its proud, spiritual pre-eminence; maintaining, fostering, cherishing, disguising, defending idolatry, by false or weak authorities, by insidious arguments, and by all the subtle tricks,

to which a foiled disputant, still bent on supporting his side of a question, is likely to have recourse. Hither, Waldo and Wickliff, Huss and Jerome of Prague, and the subsequent and more successful reformers, when they forced the odious harlot from their own national, or provincial, or parochial churches, are spiritually said to have transported her ; for at the same time that they freed themselves from the charge of idolatry, they fastened it upon the Romish church. So that referring to the former part of the angel's exposition of the ephah, we may say, that idolatry was no longer "their eye," or character, in the whole land of Christendom, but was for the future confined to give its hideous and glaring colour to the seat and territory of Rome alone.

The angel farther informed the prophet, that the two women, the members of the pure and of the reformed church, carry the ephah away to build *her* an house, that is to say, for the woman contained in the ephah ; not as our English version, "to build *it* an house," that is for the vessel itself. For although the strictness of grammatical construction would refer the pronoun to the ephah, that being, as well as the woman, of the feminine gender, and also the last antecedent, yet the manifest intention and meaning of the

passage assign it to the wickedness within; the vessel being comparatively of small importance. But it may be asked; in what scene, or with what propriety, can the pure and reformed church be said to build an house for idolatry? It is answered, that, according to a mode of expression, not uncommon in scripture*, what they prove or declare to be done, that they are said to do. Now the members of the true church proved by their teaching, preaching, and writings, that the houses erected for divine worship in the territory subject to the church of Rome, were profaned by idolatrous rites, were consecrated in a great measure to idolatrous purposes; and therefore they are said to build an house for idolatry. It is remarkable also, that at the very period of the reformation, pope Leo the tenth was building the church of St Peter's, which the testimony of the two witnesses proved to be a fane dedicated to idolatrous worship.

It may perhaps be objected here, that the christians of the east had not renounced their idolatries, and that therefore the charge of such sinful practices could not, according to the interpretation just given, be truly described, as confined to the church of Rome. But the eastern church, considered as a national church, in

* Ex. gr. Isaiah, vi. 10, Jeremiah, i. 10.

which point of view alone the ephah has respect to it, was in fact no more. Ever since the dawning of the reformation, in the morning star of Wickliff, the eastern empire had been rapidly sinking under the power of the Othman Turks; before the reformation it was completely fallen; and its church was swallowed up in the mosque of Mahomet. Consequently, idolatry was no longer "their eye," the prevailing character of the people there; for in whatever degree the Greek church might continue to be polluted with idolatry, it constituted only a body of dissenters from the established and dominant religion, and therefore could not be justly said to impart its colour to the community.

The angel concluded with a declaration, that when the house "shall be prepared*," the woman, the representative of idolatry, "shall rest there," that is to say, "in the land of Shinar," the territory ecclesiastically

* Our English version renders, "and it shall be established and set there upon her own base." Here it should seem, that **בית** is rightly understood, as the nominative to the verb **יבנה**, which is in the masculine form; but it is also continued to **העדה**, which being in the feminine gender, cannot receive the same nominative. In my rendering, I have closely followed Dr. Blaney, who remarks, "that the words **יבנה** and **מבנה** or **מבנת**, when fully written, are conjugates and are so considered by the LXX, who render *ἐπὶ τῇ ἐτοιμασίᾳ αὐτῆς*." It is also plain, that he considered the woman, not the ephah, to be the antecedent to the pronoun **לָהּ** and the nominative to the verb **יבנה**.

subject to the see of Rome, "according to that which is prepared for her." A limitation is plainly intended by these last words; and the limitation has relation both to the territory, and to the duration of the term, which are prepared and destined for the abode and continuance of idolatrous worship. Accordingly it has happened ever since the reformation, that with whatever boldness, vehemence, and steadiness the church of Rome may have urged her arrogant pretensions to be, *de jure*, the only true and universal church of Christ, she has felt herself confined, *de facto*, to those seats, to which that event restrained her. But the limit is set, not only to the dominion of popery, but also to the encroachments, which the protestant faith might make upon it. Accordingly, as the Romish church has been unable, ever since that period, to regain her ascendancy over the countries, which once submitted to her sway; so neither have her antagonists been able materially to abridge her boundaries. Individuals indeed have been converted from her idolatrous worship, but no national conversions have taken place. The event in short, has proved the prophecy to be true and the interpretation thereof correct.

But the duration also of idolatry is limited not less than her territorial extent. A term is

prepared for her, fixed by the providence of God, which she will not be able to overpass. The church of Rome may fancy her existence to be circumscribed only by that allotted to the world itself; but she cannot outlive the period of her idolatry. It is co-existent with herself, and must give its colour and character to that large portion of Christendom, over which Rome extends her spiritual sovereignty, so long as she continues to be what she is. Her pretensions to infallibility fasten, as it were, by adamant bolts and screws her idolatry upon her. The extent indeed of the term is not defined; but we may presume, that it will be known to be approaching towards its end, whenever the church of Rome shall be found to contract in any material degree the circuit of her dominions; and the same too if she shall be found to enlarge it to any considerable extent. For her expansion, equally with her contraction, should seem to mark the period prepared for her, according to this prophecy, either to have expired, or to be on the point of expiring; and therefore it may be, and, in case it should take place, will be, the immediate or proximate prelude to her downfall. If she should be permitted to extend her limits, God grant, that Britain at least may not be comprehended within them!

For though the subjection would be short, the disgrace would be most foul, the guilt deep beyond compare. God grant us then to be vigilant, ready, and firm; for the enemy is likely to make the mightier struggles, "knowing that he hath but a short time," and therefore "gaining resolution from despair." Lastly, God grant, that the subversion of the Romish church may ultimately be effected in the truly desirable way, by the conversion of Romanists from their idolatries and superstitions to the sole service of the one true God, and of the one mediator between God and man.

NOTE FROM PAGE 325.

Instead of the present reading עַיַן, "their eye," Archbishop Newcome reads and renders עֲוֹן, "their iniquity." Dr. Blaney reads עֲוֹנֵם, but renders, as if it had the plural affix, "their iniquities." The authorities alleged in support of these new readings are far from being sufficient to warrant the adoption of them. All the manuscripts, except one, read the first three letters עַיַן. Four read the word in the plural number, without any affix; and of these, one has the whole word, and another the two letters עַי, on a rasure. Hence it is conjectured by the Archbishop, that these two manuscripts originally read in conformity with the other manuscript, which alone has Vau, instead of Iod, for the second letter. But, as Dr. Blaney has observed, with respect to the latter of the two, "the presumption can go no farther than עֲוֹנֵם," because the plural termination is not upon the rasure. With respect to that, which has the whole word on a rasure, it is to be remarked, that the supposition of the original word having been any word beginning with Gnain, is not very probable, because there could then have been no reason for erasing the first letter. The word, that supplied the place of the rasure, is more likely to have been עֲוֹנֵם, imported by error from the eighth verse. The Archbishop then can be allowed to adduce only one manuscript in favour of his reading.

The reading of Dr. Blaney is not supported by any one manuscript, but is collected, as to the first two letters, from the solitary manuscript which reads עֲוֹנֵם, and as to the plural termination, from the four which read עֲוֹנֵם.

The ancient versions are divided. The vulgate reads with the printed text; *Hæc est oculus eorum inuniversa terra.* The LXX as decidedly accord with Archbishop Newcome; *αυτη η αδικια αυτων εν παση τη γη*, with which the Arabic coincides. Both the Archbishop and Dr. Blaney refer to the Syriac version, each claiming it as a witness on his own side: It is more certainly in opposition to the printed text. *חובא רכלא ארעא*, the iniquities of the whole land. But since the author has not given a literal translation of the passage, it is very difficult to guess what the reading of his manuscript exactly was. He compounds the two speeches of the angel into one, and instead of describing the subject denoted by the ephah to be in all the land, he makes it to be inclosed within the ephah itself. "This is the measure which is going forth; and in it are the iniquities of all the land." He seems to have concluded aright, that since the ephah was a vessel of capacity, and is described as ready to go forth, it must be intended to convey something in it. But not perceiving the figurative sense of the word *עפא*, and finding the contents of the vessel afterwards described as "wickedness," he persuaded himself, that iniquity must be the thing intended here, and therefore being farther encouraged by the facility of the emendation, he altered by conjecture the *Iod* into *Vau*, giving at the same time a correspondent turn to the whole passage. It is also possible, that not attending to the progress of the prophecy, he might confound this part of the vision with the fourth, and suppose the removal of the ephah to be merely a repetition of the removal of the iniquity in iii. 9. Having then ventured on so important an alteration in the form and sense of the word, he is not likely to have been very careful, whether he rendered it in the singular or plural number. Yet I conceive his rendering, "the iniquities of *all the land*," to be more favourable to the Archbishop's reading than to Dr. Blaney's, because it is plain that he has expressed, what he supposed to be the antecedent, instead of the possessive pronoun, meaning by "the land," the inhabitants of the land. Upon the whole there is good reason to think, that the Syriac translator's manuscript agreed with our printed Hebrew text, and that he rashly took upon himself the office of conjectural critic.

Jonathan, the Chaldee paraphrast, at the first view, may be cited as a witness, either for the printed text, or for the new readings; but upon consideration his evidence will be

found to incline strongly in favour of the former. His track is not difficult to be descried. He did not distinguish this part of the vision from the preceding one, which he has connected with it; and like the Syriac translator, he did not apprehend the signification of the figure here used. So venturing upon the same obvious emendation, he has interpreted the ephah, as if it were the emblem of unjust and knavish dealing, and has paraphrased the passage thus; "These are the people, who have been receiving and giving by a measure of deceit," or a false measure. But then he immediately adds; "Behold they are disclosed manifest to all the inhabitants of the land." These last words cannot arise in the way of interpretation, or paraphrase, out of the readings of Archbishop Newcome and, Dr. Blaney, with which they have nothing in common. But if we consider, that he probably found ~~eye~~ in his manuscript, and suppose that his conscience would not permit him to pass it by without some notice, it is easy to discern, that they are a paraphrase (an awkward one it must be allowed, yet the best he could give) of a word, the meaning of which he did not catch. "Their eye," the eye of all the inhabitants of the land, shall manifestly behold the gross iniquity of the fraudulent dealers: which is the same thing as saying, that it shall be manifestly disclosed to them. Thus it appears, that the Targum has preserved no very obscure traces of the reading of the present Hebrew text, which receives therefrom a strong confirmation. It is likely, that the author was the more induced to find some signification for it, as he could not fail to perceive, that his own interpretation of the amended one presented nothing better, than a feeble repetition of the curse denounced in the sixth part of the vision against theft, which plainly includes all forms and degrees of injustice and dishonesty.

Dr. Blaney endeavours to fortify his reading by an objection, which applies equally to Archbishop Newcome's and to the printed text, viz. that it will be difficult to find a proper noun, to which the plural affix may be referred. But this difficulty could not have struck the Doctor himself with any great force, when he made his translation, or he had forgotten his translation, when he wrote his note; for in his English text we find, as I have above noticed, the plural affix inserted, "their iniquities," which agrees with no reading whatever.

If indeed the reading of the Hebrew text had involved some contradiction, or some insuperable difficulty as to sense and grammar, it might perhaps have been allowable to propose in the margin or in a note, one of the new readings on the feeble authority, by which they are sustained. But neither contradiction nor grammatical inaccuracy can be pleaded against it; and it is shewn, I trust, in the commentary, that very good sense in itself and altogether congruous with this part of the vision may be made of it. If that sense be somewhat subtle and recondite, it is no objection to the reading; for it is a good canon of criticism, that of two readings supported by nearly equal authority, that, which is the more refined and difficult, is generally to be preferred, because copyists and translators are more likely to alter that into the easy and obvious, than vice versa. This rule is strictly applicable to the readings before us, and may be successfully pleaded in confirmation of the authority already so greatly preponderant in favour of the received text.

PART VIII.

CAP. VI. 1——8.

IN the second part of the vision, under the symbol of the four horns, the fortunes of the four great empires of the earth were sketched, with a rapid, but faithful pencil. They were doomed to fall in succession, the one before the other, and the last before the spiritual kingdom of the people of God. In the third part, the conquest of the Roman empire was predicted and the triumph of the church proclaimed. In the fourth, the principle, on which the whole procedure of God towards his people took place, was laid down and explained with sufficient distinctness; and in the fifth, the constitution of the divine kingdom on earth, was exhibited in the fulness of beauty and glory, by a set of striking and most appropriate symbols. A state of things indeed strictly in conformity to that constitution, can hardly, as it should seem, subsist on earth,

while the sceptre of dominion shall be swayed by mortal hands. But all the weakness of a fallen nature and all the blindness or perverseness, incident to human governors, afford no excuse, and, one can hardly believe, are sufficient to account, for the predictions delivered in the following scenes. The Roman empire having been subjected to the church of Christ, and being in point of fact nearly conterminous with it, the two are in the prophecy identified; and the melancholy character, which is given of the people of the earth, in the sixth and seventh parts, belongs indiscriminately to both. Such then being the true character of the Roman empire and catholic church, its profession of christianity must be considered as very equivocal and, in a great measure, nominal; and its system of worship, instead of being expressive of heartfelt submission and loyalty to its heavenly King, became rather an act of revolt and rebellion against him; while the severe and sanguinary measures, whereby it supported its apostacy against the more faithful and zealous christians, were in reality a persecuting war carried on by it against the true church of Christ. Hence we cannot be surprised, that the relapsed Roman empire, though in a christian form, should be considered, as the last of the four horns revived, and should be

treated accordingly. In the following; which is the last, part of the vision, the prophet was shewn the grand outline of the state; in which it would appear at different periods and in different parts, from the commencement of its revolt, till near its final close, and of the means by which its downfall would be effected.

1. And again I lifted up mine eyes, and looked ;
and, behold, four chariots going forth from
between two mountains ; and the mountains
were mountains of brass.

It has been generally supposed, that the four chariots are intended to represent the four great empires. The interpretation seems to have owed its origin to nothing, but the coincidence of the numbers ; and it has continued to meet with the assent and approbation of commentators, only from the difficulty of finding any other four subjects, that may with tolerable accuracy answer to the character of the symbols. But if the truth of the position, for which I have contended in the introduction to the sixth part, be admitted, namely, that the book of Zechariah, from the seventh verse of the first chapter to the end of the sixth, contains, not a collection of separate visions, but the narrative of a single vision, of which, the successive parts follow each other with the regularity and order

of a well written history, then it will be quite certain, notwithstanding one or two accidental, and perhaps only seeming, coincidences, that the four great empires are not the subjects of this scene. This conclusion however must be considered as extending absolutely and exclusively to only the three former of them. The fourth, having been converted to christianity, professing itself to be the kingdom of Christ, and being externally identified therewith, though in reality waging war against it, as we have above seen, will endure as long as the church shall be militant on earth ; and therefore is so far from being unconcerned in this part of the vision, that it is its very and immediate subject. The four chariots then betoken events about to befall the Roman empire, or rather four different states, in which it will be found at different periods, or in different parts, posterior to its conversion and subsequent apostacy.

2. In the first chariot were red horses, and in
3. the second chariot black horses ; and in the third chariot white horses ; and in the fourth chariot grisled horses, dark brown ones*.

* Our authorized English version renders "grisled and bay horses ;" the connective particle being inserted, as if understood, and the word "bay" being rendered "strong" in the margin. The reasons, which have induced me to render as above, will be stated hereafter.

The number of the horses to each chariot is not specified. Probably it was four, to correspond with the number of the chariots. But since the number of horses was alike in all, it made no distinction in the symbols; and so the notice of it was omitted, as immaterial in so short a narrative. In the fifth verse, the interpreting angel affords the prophet some explanation of the figures before us, and therefore it is necessary to turn our attention to that, previously to pursuing our commentary on the above.

4. Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, "What are these my Lord?"
5. And the angel answered and said unto me, "These are the four winds of the heavens, going forth from standing before the Lord of the whole earth."

Although the interpretation given by the angel amounts to no more than an explanation of one figure by another; yet the latter one is such, as leads us to the true signification of the imagery. It is certain, that the winds are not to be understood, as being such literally, but as the emblems of what the word itself is often used to express, spirits; and here of heavenly spirits, angelic ministers, employed by God in the execution of his will, like the horsemen in the first scene; for which reason they are said to "stand

before him ;” waiting, as it were, to learn his pleasure, and ready to go forth to action on having learned it. Our excellent translators so understood the figure, as they have abundantly shewn, by giving us in their rendering the antitype, instead of the type, spirits, instead of winds. It is probable, that Zechariah, or rather the interpreting angel, had in his eye the fourth verse of the one hundred and fourth Psalm, in which God is said to make “his angels winds,” or spirits, “his ministers a flaming fire.” In Hebrews, i. 7, the apostle quotes that text, as affording the sublimest image, under which the scripture represents those celestial beings to our understandings; while in the fourteenth verse; he prevents the possibility of supposing, that either himself or David spake of winds or fire in a proper literal sense, and as if they were metaphorically termed angels and ministers of God ; but on the contrary, he shews, that the latter, literally understood, are termed winds and flaming fire by a splendid figure, intended to characterize them, as created intelligences, invested with very extensive powers and sent forth by their Creator and Lord, on the ordinary and extraordinary errands of his judgement and mercy. Hence it appears, that the angelic ministers are here described as the four winds, not merely with a view to intimate

their spiritual nature, but in order to signify, that the authority committed to them extends over all the parts of nature and all the works of man, in every quarter of the globe. Wherever the winds blow, there they are, expansive, swift, and mighty, as they, employed in carrying on that mysterious and stupendous, that comprehensive and complicated operation, "whereby all things are made to work together for good to them that love God." Thus it appears that the four winds are only another figure, signifying the angelic host, which, in the first part of the vision, appeared as men mounted on horses, and was represented in the fifth*, as the seven eyes of the Lamb; the number four, as well as seven, denoting totality and perfection.

The same subjects are expressed by the same symbol of chariots and horses in several passages of scripture; for as in ancient days the strength of armies much consisted in chariots, which were always the vehicles of commanders and distinguished officers; and as the power of kings was chiefly manifested by the number of the chariots, which they could bring into the field, so the word of God condescending to human infirmity, and therefore likening things in heaven to things on earth, exhibits the omnipotence of Jehovah,

* Commentary, p. 259.

and represents the angelic ministers of his providence, under the figure of horses and chariots. Thus in 2 Kings, vi, 17, the attendant of Elisha, alarmed at the dangers that threatened his master and himself, is permitted, for his consolation, to see the angelic guards that protected them, under the forms of horses and chariots of fire. In 2 Kings, ii, 11, Elijah is described, as ascending up to heaven in a chariotry and horses of fire; as Elisha, in his exclamation of delight and admiration, termed them, "the chariotry of Israel and the horsemen thereof," the angelic protectors set by divine providence to oversee and guard his people; or as Habakkuk calls them, "the horses and chariots of salvation." But no where is the figure so pointedly determined to angelic ministers, as in Psalm, lxviii. 17. There it is said, "the chariotry of God is tens of thousands, thousands of iteration," (or reiterated thousands, thousands multiplied by thousands,) "Jehovah is among them; Sinai is in the sanctuary." That is to say, God protects and defends his holy place and his people, who worship therein, with invincible might. He is present among them and for them, with all his majesty and glory, attended by his celestial train; though invisibly, yet as really and effectually present, to every good and saving purpose,

as he was at the terrific mountain of legislation. Sinai, with all its awful grandeur, is in the holy place*. In the same manner, to the same purpose, and with equal effect, he is in the christian church, with his horses and chariots of salvation.

But before we proceed farther, it is to be observed, that the description of the emblem is not full and complete. The chariots are not said to be under any guidance; no mention being made of charioteers. Yet doubtless the prophet saw the horses under the direction and controul of charioteers; for the prophetic emblems are always to be understood, except specially described to be otherwise, as complete in their parts and as attended by all the properties and accidents, that are generally found to accompany the same subjects in a natural and ordinary state; as in the second scene†, the horns were found to imply the existence of animals who bore them. As proper and literal chariots then are not seen to set off on journies without charioteers, so neither were these; and the silence of the prophet is

* I have nearly followed Bishop Horsley, both in the version and explication of the passage, vol. 2, p. 26 and 180. I see no advantage in the two other renderings proposed by the learned prelate. Ludovicus de dieu, Geyer, and Hammond had preceded him in the first. The excellent commentary of de dieu may be seen in Pole's Synopsis.

† Commentary, p. 48.

reducible to that elliptical form of expression, by which we commonly speak of horse, and of carriages, without thinking it necessary to specify the horsemen and drivers. The same ellipsis is not unfrequent in Hebrew. Thus in 2 Kings, vi, horse and chariotry are mentioned several times, but without mentioning the riders or drivers; and in one of those instances the chariots and horses are certainly emblematical.

As then the horses in the first scene had riders, so we conclude, that the chariots here had drivers. But there* the spiritual agents were found to be denoted, not by the horses, but by the men who were seen mounted on them; and accordingly it cannot be doubted, that here the charioteers, visible to Zechariah, and not the chariots or the horses, are intended to represent the subjects described as four winds, that is to say, the angelic ministers; of whom, it must be confessed, that mere chariots and horses do not seem to be the most suitable emblems. The horses consequently denote here, as they do there, the inferior agents, moved and impelled by the celestial ministers of the divine will. Those agents may be either physical, or moral, or both; that is to say, either the elements of nature, wielded and directed by angels; or men, whose opinions,

* Commentary, p. 8.

motives, passions, and actions are in some manner and measure guided and impelled by their spiritual influences. After this, nothing is left for the chariots themselves, but to signify the events, which are produced by their operation, or controuled and ordered by their management. Accordingly it is to be observed, that in the first part of the vision, the events to be brought about or directed by the agency of the celestial ministers, through the human instruments, are not symbolically introduced; but are either predicted in the words of the divine oracle, or are reserved for the second part, where they are represented under a separate and quite different figure*; and therefore the symbols are in the first part carried no farther, than to represent the physical and moral agents. But here, when it was proposed to arrange both those agents and the spiritual ones, together with the effects produced by their agency, under one set of emblems, it became necessary to distinguish this scene from the first, by the addition of the chariots.

The chariots are said to come forth from between two mountains. A mountain, on account of the firmness and solidity of its materials, the extent of its base, and the loftiness of its summit, is the proper emblem of greatness, stability, and

* Commentary, p. 42.

duration, as we have before seen. Hence it is used as the figure of a kingdom or empire, and as such also it has appeared before, in the fifth part of the vision*. The two mountains are expressed in the original Hebrew with great emphasis to be mountains of brass; that is to say, impregnable, indissoluble, everlasting kingdoms. These are and can be no other, than the Jewish and Gentile branches of the church, the two provinces, of which the divine kingdom on earth consists, and which, though now mingled together in the common body of God's people, and therefore figured as a single mountain in other places†, were originally distinct, and will hereafter appear so again, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in, and the partial blindness of Israel shall be removed‡.

Zechariah does not say, that the chariots came from both the mountains, or from either of them separately, but from between them; from an interval, or intermediate space common to both. Now the winds, denoting the charioteers, are said to come from standing before the Lord of the whole earth; and since the chariots, as we have before seen, are not separable from the

* Commentary, p. 238.

† Ex gr. Isaiah, ii. 2, Daniel, ii. 35, 44, Zechariah, iv. 7.

‡ Romans, xi, 25.

charioteers, and they were not seen separately from the chariots, they must come from the same place; and consequently, the space between the mountains, and the presence of the Lord, must needs be the something. Christ's presence is represented under the figure of this interval, because He is the mediator, not only between God and man, but between the two divisions of the church, having "broken down the middle wall of partition," so as to form an open communication between both; having "made of the twain one new man;" having abated and brought to an end, or, as the apostle by a strong figure expresses it, having "slain the enmity" between Jew and Gentile by his cross*.

The whole earth, comprehending of course the two mountains, is the seat of christianity, that is to say, the Roman empire in its converted state; of which, Christ, upon its conversion, became confessedly the Lord. Into this wide spread territory the son of man sends the angels of his presence, who wait upon him, "ascending and descending" at his command; and by them he disposes and orders his human instruments to such purposes and effects, as he sees fit for the support and defence, the admonition and instruction, the warning, correction and chastisement of his people.

* Ephesians, ii. 14, 15, 16.

After the moral transgression of the christian world, predicted, and threatened with the curse of God, in the formidable flying roll, and the still more heinous sins against the truth and purity of religious faith and worship, represented by the ephah and its wicked contents, we might well expect to find the divine judgements falling on the empire; either directly inflicted on it, as the apportioned penalties, or following by providential appointment, as the proper consequences, of its guilt, with perhaps symptoms of his returning favour to any part of it, that might repent and turn unto him. According to this just expectation, the eighth scene opens, as above described, with the view of four angelic spirits, ruling and directing the course of four sets of horses, which represent physical and moral agents, and which draw four chariots, representing the calamitous or prosperous events, ordained or permitted to take place, in their several circuits through the empire, by the providence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The revolt of the christian church from purity of morals must be dated, as we have seen*, no long time after the establishment of christianity by Constantine the great. The commencement of this part of the vision cannot be placed long

* Commentary, p. 320.

after that, consequently it must coincide with the period, in which the seven trumpets in the Revelation of St. John, according to the opinion of most commentators, are prepared to sound. This coincidence is perhaps very unexpected, and is certainly very remarkable; so remarkable indeed, that it naturally leads us to look for other marks of concord between the symbols. Such will readily occur.

Previously to the production of the seven trumpets, an introductory scene is related in the seventh chapter of the Revelation: four angels appear holding the four winds of the earth, and having power, or permission, given them "to hurt the earth and the sea." But they are strictly forbidden to exert that power, until the servants of God are sealed. The completion of the sealing then appears to be the term set to the captivity of the winds; after which, we might reasonably expect to hear of their manumission, and of the effects produced by their violence upon the face of nature*. But no such thing is described to take place. For although the sealing is immediately carried into execution, yet at

* The classical reader will not fail to recollect the poetical description in Virgil;

venti, velut agmine facto,
Qua data porta, ruunt, et terras turbine perflant, &c.

the conclusion of it, not one word is said, as to the loosing of the winds. Instead thereof, as it should seem, at the opening of the seventh seal, the seven trumpets are brought forth, given to seven angels, and sounded in succession. Now there is certainly a very close relation between winds and trumpets; the loosing of the one is analogous to the sounding of the other; and both four and seven are numbers of totality and perfection. Hence, and from the silence observed as to the release of the four winds and their subsequent effects, of which we are led by so awful a note of preparation to expect an ample description, we may conclude with the highest probability and with little apprehension of error, that both the four winds and the seven trumpets in the Revelation of St. John, are intended to comprehend and signify the same series of events.

But this conclusion, though it be obvious, as well as certain, will not satisfactorily account for the introduction into St. John's vision of an emblem, which, since no use whatever is made of it, seems only to encumber the prophecy with a superfluous piece of machinery. Now, as in nature, so in grace, the divine spirit does nothing in vain; and therefore, since the utility and end of the emblem is not otherwise discernible, it is a highly probable inference, that it is introduced

for the sole purpose of connecting the scenery of the seven trumpets with some prophecy of the old testament, in which the same period of time and the same events are the subject of prediction. But with what prophecy is it so likely to connect, or rather, with what other can it connect, that scenery, but this? Here we find four spiritual agents brought before us under the same emblem, as is employed there, that of the four winds; they are described to hold the same office as the seven angels of the trumpets, the sounding of which is the same thing as the loosing of the winds, that of standing before the Lord of the whole earth*; and the brevity and obscurity of the whole representation is such, as to need all the illustration, which a connexion with a subsequent and clearer prediction is calculated to throw upon it. The probability of that connexion is farther greatly increased, and all doubt removed, if any can yet be entertained, by the pattern of a like proceeding, which has been already afforded in the commentary† on the fifth part of this vision, to which, we find, that St. John‡ has referred, in order to give it the

* The only difference is, that in Revelation, viii. 2, the seven angels are said to stand before God.

† Commentary, p. 223.

‡ Revelation, xi. 4.

illustration of his own plainer symbols, and thereby to connect the Jewish with the christian apocalypse.

The obvious deficiency of the figure, in the omission of the charioteers, has been before accounted for, upon the common principle of an ellipsis. But we may now account for and supply it in a still more satisfactory manner, from the narrative, which St. John has given us of what passed in his vision. "I saw," says that apostle, "four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth." The four winds are here expressly stated to be under the guidance of four angels; transfer those angels to the chariots, and the images will be perfectly correspondent and proportionate. The charioteers, driving the chariots, are the angels holding the winds. It may however be objected, that thus the winds do not represent the same subjects in the two prophets; in Zechariah they denote celestial spirits, in St. John the inferior agents set in motion by them. In answer to this objection, it is to be observed, that the winds are not described alike by the two inspired writers. St. John speaks of them as the winds of the earth; Zechariah calls them the winds of the heavens. As the latter describes them according to their nature, as belonging to the heavens, so

of course he means to describe the beings represented by them, according to their nature, as heavenly, spiritual ministers. But the apostle, speaking of the four winds, as earthly, had regard, not to their nature, but to the subjects, on which they act; the things that occupy the surface of the earth; accordingly he meant to represent by them, not heavenly angels, but the physical and moral agents, on which the angels act, and by that operation produce important and permanent effects on earthly affairs. This distinction effectually removes the objection abovementioned, preserving strong similarity, though not absolute identity, between the symbols; and shewing that the four winds, or spirits, of Zechariah are the four angels of St. John, and the four winds of the latter are the four sets of horses of the former.

But Zechariah and St. John, though they perfectly agree in the general tenor of their predictions, and in the general figure, by which the subjects of them are summarily represented, yet in proceeding farther to open the volume of futurity, have developed it on a more narrow or a more diffuse scale, according to what might reasonably be expected, in two prophecies so differently circumstanced; of which, the one is only incipient, or rather, precursory, the other

conclusive and final; the one given, while the events predicted were not only distant, but prior to the introduction of that dispensation of the divine providence, under which they were destined to occur; the other, when not only the commencement of them was nigh at hand, but the dispensation was actually established and in full force. Under the seven trumpets, the series of inflictions appointed to befall corrupt Christendom is represented by a great variety of symbols and at considerable length. But that, which is betokened by the course of the four chariots, is continued and closed under that fourfold division and without change of figure. It is not however intended to pursue this comparison any farther here, or to shew, how the trumpets correspond to the chariots, and which to which; because it would evidently lead into a more minute and laborious discussion of the apocalyptic symbols, than the present commentary will conveniently admit of.

The four divisions of Zechariah's chariots are sufficiently distinguished by three several marks; first, by the different colours of the four sets of horses; secondly, by the order of their procession; and thirdly, by the quarter of the earth, to which their course is directed.

I. The chariot with red horses. The colour of these horses is that of the horses of the first

troop in the first part of the vision, and of the horse in the second seal of St. John's Revelation. In conformity with them, it must denote wrath inflicted in wars. Those wars may be considered both as proper and as figurative; the former comprehending foreign invasions and civil broils, insurrections and battles; the latter denoting the strife of opinions and parties, but nevertheless with an especial regard to the grand subject of the vision; consequently, the contentions of christian sects upon theological doctrines, producing when carried to excess, religious persecutions.

The order of procession, which is the second mark of distinction, determines the commencement of the events, prefigured by the first chariot, to a period quickly following the reign of Constantine the great, when the moral practice of christians had become greatly relaxed and even much corrupted, according to what has been said in the commentary on the type of the flying roll.

The third mark of distinction is the quarter to which the chariots are sent. But the first is remarkably distinguished from the rest, by the negation of that characteristic; and this is attended by another peculiarity, that whereas the other chariots and horses are introduced a second time,

the first is mentioned only once. This is the consequence of the former ; for it is evident, that the second and third chariots are introduced a second time with no other view, but to declare the point, to which their progress is directed ; and the same is a principal, though not the only, reason for the reappearance of the fourth chariot. Hence it is to be argued, that if the first chariot had been determined to any specific quarter, it would have been introduced, like the others, a second time, stamped with the third mark of distinction. But the silence of the prophet on that head, while it plainly discriminates the first from the other chariots, does also bespeak, as intelligibly and certainly, though not perhaps quite so obviously, the absence of any such limitation. We conclude therefore, that the angelic charioteers were commissioned to guide the first chariot in an unrestricted course over the whole territory of Christendom.

Events took place answerable to the prophetic symbol. Soon after the decease of Constantine, which took place in the year 337, the Roman empire was laid waste by foreign invaders and convulsed by insurrections and civil wars. In the first year of the reign of Constantius the Persians began that series of sanguinary and desolating incursions, which, with longer or

shorter intermissions, continued to afflict the eastern provinces of the empire, for almost three hundred years. Julian lost his life and almost ruined his army, in the vain attempt to retaliate them by conquest; and the Persian standards were planted by Chosroes on the heights of Chalcedon, and in the sight of the inhabitants of Constantinople. Both east and west, but especially the latter, suffered the most serious disasters, from the weakness, folly, and ambition of the sons of Constantine, and afterwards of various competitors for empire. The Goths, the Huns, the Sarmatians, and other barbarous nations overran and subdued the provinces, pillaged and oppressed the capital, till the Roman empire in the west, which, during a great part of the fifth century had been little better than nominal, before the close of it expired by the abdication of Augustulus, in the year of 476. Thus did all the calamities, desolations, and destructions of war, signified by the symbol of the first chariot and its red horses, fall upon Christendom, according to the order of procession given to the chariots, and extend themselves over the whole Roman empire, in both its divisions and in all its provinces.

But the wars typified and predicted by the first chariot, are, as we have seen, not only

literal and proper, but metaphorical and spiritual; the wars of contending sects, maintaining with fierceness and animosity their opposite opinions, and pushing their mutual opposition to the extreme of persecution.

Sects and parties, as we have had occasion to see, even in the course of this commentary, began in early times to divide the unity of the christian church, and "often set those at widest variance, whom the similitude of virtuous feelings should then most have united." But it was in the time of Constantine, that the grand, pernicious heresy of Arius took its rise, and during his reign continued to spread its poisonous influence through the church. "You might see," says Eusebius*, "not only the rulers of the churches fiercely combating in the war of words, but the people also split into parties; and to such an extent of indecency did matters proceed, that the venerable subjects of divine revelation sustained the most disgraceful ridicule, in the very theatres of the unbelievers." In vain did the pious emperor, not more anxious, as the tenor of his epistles plainly shews, for the strength and glory of his dominions, than zealous for the well-being and honour of the household of Christ, endeavour to assuage and soften the bitter and exasperated

* Eusebius de vita Constantini M. lib. 2, cap. 61.

feelings of the contending parties, by his observations on the difficulty, and, as it appeared to him at first sight, the levity of the controversy*; and by the consideration of what became them, as members of the church and disciples of Christ. In vain also did he hope and attempt, by the convoking of the council of Nice, to silence and overwhelm all disputes, by the solemn and authoritative sentence of that grave assembly. The peace of the christian world was incurably broken up, and the root of bitterness spreading like a gangrene its baleful effects, went on to corrupt and dissolve the continuity of the body of Christ.

By the obstinacy and violence of the disputants, the zeal of the emperor was kindled into anger, and at length shewn in persecution. Arius was banished by an imperial edict†; his party was sentenced to bear the infamous title of Porphyrians, as having inherited the malicious spirit of that bitter enemy of the christian faith; the books of the heresiarch were ordered to be committed to the flames, and even the concealed possession of his writings was made punishable by death. The lapse of Constantius, the son and

* De vita Constantini M. lib. 2, cap. 70, where see Lowth's note.

† Socrates, lib. 1, cap. 9, p. 31.

successor of Constantine, into the Arian opinions, afforded a triumph in its turn to that sect, who, both then and afterwards, used the advantages they gained, with little scruple or moderation. But this is not the place to pursue the history in detail. It is sufficient to mention, that new divisions and subdivisions of opinions and sects, continually starting up, at once enlarged the grounds, and inflamed the spirit, of religious hostility, till it furnished occasion to a heathen historian to declare, that "the strifes and animosities, the mutual provocations and injuries of christians surpassed the furious enmities of wild beasts to man*."

Thus do the contentions of the various christian sects, pushed to the extremity of persecution, justify the warlike figure, by which they are represented. They took place also according to the order of procession, and by degrees extended themselves over the whole face of Christendom agreeably to the same.

It is not certain, however, that these early calamities are to be considered as fully satisfying the prophetic meaning of the type; or that the first chariot is to be considered, as having finished its course, before the second set off on its appointed circuit. Perhaps, as we do not find

*Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. 22, cap. 5.

any limit fixed to the extent of its course, but those of Christendom or the Roman empire, so neither are we warranted in fixing any period to the time, for which it is to hold its progress, short of that, which is appointed for the complete accomplishment of the whole prophecy. Certainly the history of events will justify us in carrying it thus far.

II. The chariot with black horses. So far as the character of the agents and the events hereby represented are to be determined by the colour of the horses, no advantage can be derived in this instance, from a reference to the horsemen in the first part. It may however be supposed, that much light will be thrown upon the subject, by a comparison of the horseman, who, in the Revelation of St. John, appears, at the opening of the third seal, mounted on a black horse, with the chariot and horses now before us. Famine, or severe scarcity, are certainly the subjects of prediction in that seal. But then we collect our interpretation, not so much from the colour of the horse, as from the implements born by the rider, and still more clearly from the voice of the cherub, which both urged and restricted his career. Take away those circumstances from the description ; and then the colour of the horse cannot well be supposed to enter farther into the

representation of famine, than as it may signify the general lamentation ensuing on so great a calamity. Black is often used in scripture, as well as by profane writers, for the sign of mourning; as the most expressive and eminent of all tokens of sorrow. As such it must be taken here. But as mourning itself may spring from other causes besides famine, so again may black be used for the sign of other things beside mourning; and consequently the colour of the horses of this chariot, though it must be considered as indicative, among other things, of deep mourning, is not to be restricted to that signification. Black is the robe of darkness, as well as of grief; the word is often joined in scripture with words expressive of darkness; and darkness is so often and so familiarly applied to the mind in a state of ignorance or of delusion, that the application is almost proper and void of metaphor. The colour of these horses therefore must be interpreted of ignorance, as well as of mourning; and especially, as the main subject of the vision obliges us to understand it, of religious ignorance, a state directly opposed to that typified by the candlestick.

The angelic charioteer then, who rules the black horses, is either commissioned to introduce into Christendom, or is sent to watch and

regulate there, a season of deep distress and mourning, and also of ignorance, or of intellectual and religious darkness.

The order of procession determines the events, signified by this figure, to a period posterior to the introduction of the calamities, which the preceding chariot carried in its course. I have said posterior to the *introduction* of those calamities; for neither the description given by the prophet, nor the nature of the subject, requires us to suppose, that the course of the former must have concluded, before that of the latter commenced. At the same time, the things signified thereby are for the most part subsequent, and even consequent, to those denoted by the former, though they are also in some part concomitant with them. The calamities of repeated invasions, of frequent and almost continual tumults, of civil wars and religious dissensions have a direct and almost necessary tendency to produce some great and remarkable catastrophe, that may be suitably signalized as a subject of general mourning, and also to introduce and perpetuate a period of intellectual night and darkness. Such events have taken place accordingly. But before we proceed to apply them to the prophetic emblems, it must be observed, that the predicted woes are limited to a certain quarter of Christendom, as

appears by the third circumstance attending this chariot, the quarter to which its course is directed and confined.

6. "As to that*, in which are the black horses, *they* are going forth to the land of the north."

The third chariot also will be found to go to the north, while the fourth alone will be observed to go southward. Thus we see, that although the four chariots are said to represent the same subjects, as the four winds of heaven, whence we naturally expect to find them severally proceeding to the four points of the compass; yet the first turns its course in all directions, while those

* Dr. Blaney, considering it impossible to construe the first words of this verse, has joined them to the preceding one, and has rendered the clause thus; "before the Lord of the whole earth and of that which is therein." In order to effect this new construction, he is obliged to prefix to the word *אשר* the particle *Vau*, which he supposes to have been lost from before it. But the restoration, or rather addition, of this letter is made without the warrant of any manuscript or version, and demands admission, only as an happy conjecture, relieving the construction of the passage from the heavy charge of impossibility. The sense of the passage, however, is far from being improved by an addition, so unnecessary, where the object of the writer or speaker is not to extol the power of God, and so feeble in expression, if it were; and the difficulty of construction is effectually remedied in the version I have given. The pronoun relative refers to the substantive *המרכבה* understood; that is taken as a nominative absolute, and is construed, "as to the chariot, *אשר* בָּהּ, in which," or in latin, "quod currum attinet, in quo." See Buxtorf, Thes. Gr. p. 432, or Shroeder, p. 316.

of the three last lie only northward and southward, leaving the east and west unvisited by any winds particularly appropriated to them. The best, perhaps the only, way to remove or overcome the difficulty hence arising, in a general view, is to consider the limitations, not as intended to restrict the operations of the winds themselves, but only to specify the locality of the subjects, on which those operations take effect, and which are particularly affected by them. Thus considered, the number four will have regard, not so much to the cardinal points of the compass, as to the totality of the heavenly agents employed, the completeness of their operation within the circuits allotted to them, and their sufficiency to the work assigned to them.

But still a question remains; why are these three chariots thus limited; or what is the meaning of their limitation? It is plain, beyond any doubt, that it must have respect to some actual, permanent, political partition of the Roman empire, according to which it was divided into two parts, which may with propriety be distinguished, as the northern or southern portion respectively, and which must have taken place previously to the commencement of the course of the second chariot. Now it is certain, that a permanent partition of the Roman empire was made

between the emperors Valentinian and Valens, in the year 364, and another, and a final one*, between Arcadius and Honorius, in the year 395. It is true that the two divisions took their names, not from the north and south, under which they are here described, but from the east and west. Yet by a person unacquainted with, or careless of, the usual mode of distinction, and looking only to their relative positions, they would stand almost an even chance of being discriminated in either way; and that with almost equal propriety; except that the prophetic mode of division would be more likely to occur to him, inasmuch as difference of latitude, by the diversity of natural productions, generally supplies more obvious and striking marks of distinction than difference of longitude. Besides it cannot escape observation, that by far the greater portion of the western empire lay to the north of its capital, Rome, and in like manner, a still greater proportion of the eastern empire lay to the south of Constantinople. And if it should be objected, that according to the prophetic division, some parts of the southern empire must lay to the north of some provinces of the northern, the

* It is remarkable that Mr. Gibbon speaks of both these acts as *final* divisions of the empire, Vol. 4, p. 242, and vol. 5, p. 138. 8vo. Ed.

objection is answered by observing, that the other method of dividing is equally open to the same; for the western empire, in like manner, surpassed its nominal limits, and extended itself to the east of many provinces that fell under the eastern division; and vice versa. But probably the chief reason to be assigned, for thusa distinguishing the eastern and western divisions of the Roman empire, is, that when the latter appeared in its revived and spiritual state, and again extended its dominion over the nations, its conquests lay wholly among the people of the north. This must be understood to include also their colonies, which, wherever situated, in Asia, Africa, or America, are properly considered as belonging to the mother countries. In the commentary on the fourth chariot a farther reason will be given for the preference given by the prophet to the division by north and south, to that by east and west.

Through this wide extent of the northern or western empire the black horses were appointed to draw the car of mourning and darkness. In the course of the wars predicted by the first chariot, Alaric, Attila, and Genseric, with other conquerors of inferior fame, defeated the armies, plundered the cities, beat down the strength, lopped off the provinces of the empire.

A nominal sovereignty, however, was for a while attached to the person of the emperor ; but in the year 476, the deposition, or abdication, of Augustulus announced the final departure of imperial dominion from its ancient seat. This last period then of the decay and detraction of the northern or western empire, together with its final extinction, and the sore calamities, which attended and succeeded that event, are the subjects of mourning, betokened by the black horses of the second chariot. The miserable condition of Italy at this period, as described by Mr. Gibbon*, sufficiently attests the propriety of the emblem. "Notwithstanding the prudence and success of Odoacer, his kingdom," says the historian, "exhibited the sad prospect of misery and desolation. Since the age of Tiberius, the decay of agriculture had been felt in Italy ; and it was a just subject of complaint that the life of the Roman people depended on the accidents of the winds and waves. In the division and decline of the empire, the tributary harvests of Egypt and Africa were withdrawn, the numbers of the inhabitants continually diminished with the means of subsistence ; and the country was exhausted by the irretrievable losses of war, famine, and pestilence. St. Ambrose

* Decline and Fall, vol. 6. p. 234.

has deplored the ruin of a populous district, which had been once adorned with the flourishing cities of Bologna, Modena, Regium, and Placentia. Pope Gelasius was a subject of Odoacer; and he affirms with strong exaggeration, that in Æmilia, Tuscany, and the adjacent provinces the human species was almost extirpated. The plebeians of Rome, who were fed by the hand of their master, perished or disappeared, as soon as his liberality was suppressed; the decline of the arts reduced the industrious mechanic to idleness and want; and the senators, who might support with patience the ruin of their country, bewailed their private loss of wealth and luxury."

But the second chariot, after carrying desolation and lamentation in its circuits through the countries which had formed the northern empire, went on to spread an intellectual blackness, of ignorance, falsehood, and religious delusion. The preceding period abounding in rapid changes, produced by the internal convulsions of weak and worn out despotism conflicting with anarchy, and by the conquests of foreign and barbarous invaders, had already witnessed the demolition of the seats of learning and the slaughter of the professors and of the pupils. In that alternation of martial toils with sensual pleasures and torpid repose,

which is the sum and substance of a barbarian's life, the cultivation of the understanding is as little the embellishment of his leisure, as the employment of his labours. The fierce victors of the western empire were not only destitute of the rudiments of art and science, but generally despising them as unwarlike and unmanly, they resigned the profession of them to those, whose sacred calling separated them from the bloody contests and dissolute pleasures of arms and revelry. But in such a state of things the modicum of knowledge and literature, that remained, was sure to react upon those who slighted them. Even in their rude controversies of law and politics, the untutored princes and nobles found it impossible to proceed, without some knowledge of letters; and they were therefore fain to have recourse to those, who retained the exclusive possession of them. It was no difficult task to mingle those subjects with religious doctrines and precepts; the clergy saw how much was in their power; and they had skill to turn the ignorance of half civilized warriors and half christianized pagans to the advantage, as they supposed, of the church, of which they themselves had conceived very erroneous and preposterous notions. Established as the lords of their religious opinions, they became also the keepers of

their consciences and the guides of their passions; and thus touching the master springs of human conduct, they used all their influence, as the instrument of increasing their wealth and of raising themselves to the highest pitch of temporal power and grandeur. The previous corruptions of religion greatly facilitated the attempt. When the precepts of morality were so little understood, or so little regarded, and when, in defiance of the plainest declarations and the most fearful threatenings, the worship of christians had become, in a great measure, idolatrous, as we have before seen in the commentary on the sixth and seventh parts of the vision, christianity was deprived of its essential attributes of truth and holiness, and was degraded into a flexible form of superstition, applicable to the lowest purposes of fraud and imposture.

Amid this gloomy and tempestuous scene of barbarism and tyranny, ignorance and superstition, the Roman pontiffs building on the grounds, which mistaken piety and ecclesiastical ambition had already laid, reared their enormous spiritual dominion and extended it on every side over the countries that had formed the northern empire, and even far beyond its utmost limits. At their bidding, and under their influence, with their approbation and encouragement,

new articles were added to the credenda of christianity; fabulous and marvellous histories and biographies, strange mysteries and sorceries; with an innumerable crowd of fanciful rites and ceremonies, invented by the prolific genius of monkish superstition, or adopted with suitable alterations from heathen rituals, were imposed upon the people and covered the pure light of true religion in their minds with a cloak of darkness.

By a just retribution, the dissemination of ignorance reacted on its propagators; paying no respect to the understandings of their hearers; they became negligent of cultivating their own; they were darkened by their own delusions. While they locked up the holy scriptures from the people, they became themselves, not only ignorant of their contents, but unable to read them: and the very bishops were so often destitute of the common rudiments of education, that such deficiency was hardly considered as a disgrace. The state of christian knowledge and morals may be easily conceived from the description of a good christian, which is given by St. Eligius, or Eloi, bishop of Noyon: "A good christian is one, who comes frequently to church and presents the oblation, which is offered on the altar to God; who tastes not of his own

fruits, till he has first offered a part to God; who, whenever the holy season draws nigh, for several days before observes chastity with his own wife, that he may approach the altar of God with a good conscience; lastly, he is one, who knows by heart the creed and the Lord's prayer." After this the sainted prelate goes on to exhort the people in the following strain: "Redeem your souls from punishment, while you have the remedies in your power: bring your oblations and tithes to the church; set up lights in the holy places, according to your ability; come also more frequently to church; humbly implore the patronage of the saints. For if you observe this advice you may come without fear in the day of judgement before the tribunal of the eternal judge, and say; Give, Lord, for we have given*." Such was the christianity of a Romish saint in the seventh century. So feebly did the lamps of the candlestick at that period glimmer in their sockets.

It is obvious, that the period of mourning must coincide with that of darkness, if for no other reasons, merely as being such. For truly it must have been a subject of the deepest grief

* The passage is cited by Mosheim in his Ecclesiastical History, cent. 7, part 2, cap. 3; whence it has been often cited by others.

and mortification to every christian, who retained any real knowledge of God and of his word, (and such persons there always were,) to behold himself surrounded on every side by licentiousness and depravity, by superstition and idolatry, in this age of darkness. But good and wise christians had other and still deeper causes of mourning. They who held the truth were compelled to hold it in silence; restrained by fear, or force, from teaching, and even from professing it. If at times it broke forth into public notice, the secular powers were called in to suppress it; and in the hope of effecting the complete and final extirpation of every root and vestige of such a formidable enemy to the corrupted church, the holy inquisition was set on foot in the thirteenth century. It would be out of place to enter here into a detail of the cruelties inflicted on faithful pious christians by that iniquitous and detestable tribunal; nor is it necessary to relate the crusades and horrible persecutions, which the popes published and carried on against the blameless and calumniated Waldenses and Albigenses. Without the expence of so much labour, it is sufficiently evident, that mourning combined with intellectual and religious darkness, marked the ages and the countries, through which the second chariot held its progress.

III. The chariot with white horses. As white is the opposite to black in the external appearance of bodily substances, so is it in its emblematical use and application. It is the colour of light, and denotes good success, happiness, rejoicing; also truth, knowledge, moral goodness. Among the ancient Romans, cars with white horses were appropriated to their divinities; and when Camillus, in his triumph after the capture of Veii, entered Rome in a chariot drawn by white horses, he brought on himself much popular indignation and obloquy, as having trespassed on the honours peculiarly dedicated to Jupiter and Apollo*. In scripture persons in authority are described as riding on white asses†; and the colour is applied to persons and things, spiritual and divine, or having some character of divinity in them. It is the colour of the horse in the first seal‡, and of those, on which our blessed Lord, with his saints, appeared, advancing to victory and conquest over the enemies of truth and holiness. But more especially we must here call to mind, that in the first scene ||

* Livii Hist. lib. 5. cap. 23.

† Judges, v. 10, Daniel, vii. 9, xi. 35, Matthew, xvii. 2. xxviii. 3, Revelation, i. 14.

‡ Revelation, vi. 2, xix. 11, 14.

|| Commentary, p. 27.

of this vision, the band of horsemen on the white horses were found to represent the angelic ministers employed to attend, inspect, and promote the propagation of the christian religion, with all its goodly train of faith, hope, and charity. The car with the white horses must therefore denote either the continued and triumphant progress, or the successful renovation, of christianity, flourishing in an improved state among a people qualified to appreciate, enjoy, and extend its blessings and its renown.

The order of procession also plainly proves, that the resuscitation of religious knowledge, the restoration of true christianity, is the thing denoted by the third chariot with its white horses. As the last preceding chariot betokened the agents of the divine providence, either visiting the christian empire with direct inflictions of vengeance, or with the natural and proper consequences of transgression, or else controuling and regulating the extent and severity of these calamities, steering the ark of the church through the ocean of perils, and finally educating good out of evil; so does the emblem now before us represent the ministers of divine truth and goodness, sent forth on the happy errand of dispelling darkness, ignorance, and delusion, with grief and mourning; rekindling the

extinct or dimmed lights of the candlestick, and restoring the faded influence of true religion. Thus the order of procession in these two chariots agrees with the order of nature. Sunshine arises upon darkness; truth, holiness, and happiness, upon ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and tyranny.

The third circumstance, by which the third chariot is distinguished, or the quarter, to which its circuit is limited, is thus announced ;

And the white went forth after them,

Our translators* have rendered these words, as part of the angel's speech, and accordingly have comprised them in the same verse. But the verb is here in the past tense, as they are also in the following verse, whereas the preceding ones are in the present. This change of tense is strongly marked by the form of the verbs in the original, and could not be undesigned by the prophet. It was no doubt intended to distinguish, as it does with clearness and precision, the termination of the angel's speech and the

* Those learned men must have felt themselves much embarrassed by their adherence to the Masoretic division of the verses, as they have sufficiently shewn by their inconsistency. *Sit verbo venia.* For in the seventh verse they have abandoned the present tense and made the prophet resume his narrative in the past; which they had no reason for doing, that would not have prevailed with them to do the same above, if they had not been withheld by the fear of departing from the authority of the Masorites.

resumption of the prophet's narrative. The direction of the black horses was matter of information*; that of the others, of ocular perception. Since the first chariot pursued an unrestricted course over the empire, Zechariah might have supposed, that the others were about to do the same. It was therefore necessary, that he should be informed on that point. But having learned, that the black horses went toward the north, he could be at no loss to decide, whither the others were proceeding, when he saw them set off, either to the same, or to the opposite point of the compass. The sixth verse ought therefore to conclude with the account of the second chariot; and then the error of our English version will be justly attributed to its true cause, the erroneous division of the verses in the Hebrew bible.

Hence it also appears, that the word "after†" is intended to mark, not the order of procession, which is sufficiently done by the enumeration of

* After noticing the difference of the tenses, Dr. Blaney observes; "to account for this difference we must understand, that the former words were spoken by the angel, who explains what was passing at the instant. But the latter is the prophet's relation of what appeared to him afterwards. A full point, or stop, therefore should be put at the end of the words, "the black horses are going forth against the land of the north."

† Dr. Blaney renders the words אל אחריהם, "against their successors" or posterity, viz. of the Persians. To this he

the chariots, but the quarter, to which the horses directed their course, which is the same as that of the preceding car, the northern or western empire. Thither the messengers and ministers of light, truth, and joy were sent on their blessed commission. Now it is a fact, ever to be remembered with thanksgiving and praise, that the order of events has actually accorded with the prophetic emblems; that after the long reign of spiritual blackness and darkness, of popish ignorance and superstition, idolatry and tyranny, throughout that extensive region, a day spring arose, a renovation of christianity, a REFORMATION of religion.

By the reformation the prodigious mass of falsehoods, forgeries, and superstitions, which successive ages of darkness had accumulated, and which the church of Rome has willingly adopted, carefully cherished, resolutely maintained, and largely multiplied, were confuted,

was led by the supposition, that the four chariots represent the four great empires, and that the second is described, as sent against the first, and the third against the second. But the analogy does not hold throughout, as it would, if the interpretation were correct. For the fourth chariot is not said to be sent against the third, or its successors, as in fact it was, if the chariots signify the four empires, the Romans having subdued and swallowed up the Grecian monarchy. I have rendered the words with our translators in their more common acceptation, which entirely agrees with the commentary.

detected, and swept away. Especially, those gross and lamentable idolatries, which she has gathered and bound close round her, as it were a garment of profaneness, were put off with holy indignation by the congregations of faithful worshippers, and were expelled and carried home to their proper habitation. Her arrogant and preposterous claims to exclusive catholicity and infallibility were exposed to merited contempt and derision; the tremendous sceptre, which she waved over the nations, was broken and the throne of her tyranny subverted. Then, from the wilderness, in which she had spent her long day of exile, pure christianity returned to cultivated lands, to peaceful villages and peopled cities; to be received and celebrated with hymns of joy and thanksgiving to her divine author, protector and restorer; to be sanctified in the faithful affections of renewed hearts and the holy conduct of christian lives; and to be established in a state of sound, vigorous, and salutary church discipline. Thus advancing in the beauty of holiness, through a liberated and rejoicing land, the third chariot, which may be truly called the triumphal car of the reformation, is most suitably represented, as drawn by horses of the same colour with those, on which the angelic ministers of the christian dispensation were

seen by the prophet riding in the first part of the vision.

The generality and brevity of the emblem render it unnecessary to trace the history of the reformation into particulars; and the more so, because a short and partial view of it has already been exhibited in the commentary on the seventh part. Hence, perhaps, an objection may be supposed to lie against the interpretation of the part before us, as being a repetition of what has been brought forward under a preceding symbol. But the repetition is far from being a mere repetition. The reformation is not the direct subject of that part of the vision; but is introduced there by anticipation, with reference to the scene now before us, and inasmuch only, as concerns its union and co-operation with that pure branch of the church of Christ, which had ever an existence, and which, long before the reformation, was found seated in the vallies of Piedmont, and scattered over divers parts of Europe, in the simple act of casting out superstitious idolatries from christian faith and worship. But so transcendent is the importance of that act, and so intimately and extensively concerned in the reformation, that it could not be adequately represented, without introducing an emblem taken from this scene, and thereby

shewing, not only the near relation of the two parts, but that the same spiritual agents are employed in both. Accordingly, in the commentary on the seventh part, a reference has been made to this place for the interpretation of the anticipated emblem.

It is there said of the two winged women, that "a wind was in their wings." To interpret this image, generally of a power to sustain a lofty, long, and rapid flight, would be little else than to repeat what had been before sufficiently expressed by the wings of the stork, a bird remarkable for such flights; and the pregnant brevity with which the scenery of the whole vision, and especially of the latter parts, is constructed, will not admit of unmeaning and superfluous decorations. But it would be mere labour in vain, after what has been already said, to be at the trouble of shewing, that the figure is to be explained only by supposing a designed reference to this part. At the same time, it is observable, that here the four winds are brought forward, whereas one only is there mentioned. This difference, however, has no other effect, than to impose on us the necessity of choosing out of those four, that, which alone can be esteemed suitable to the character of the women, representing, as they do, the true church of Christ, considered

as originally composed of the Jewish and Gentile branches, and actually subsisting in its pure and reformed members, who bear testimony to the truth with the powerful and sufficient effect of two credible witnesses*. Now it cannot be imagined, that either of the winds, which govern the first two chariots, if the interpretation above given of them make any approach towards correctness, can be that, which fills the wings of the stork, whose name is indicative of pure and hallowed affections, of charity, of sanctity and divine favour. Neither can it, for similar reasons, be the wind of the fourth chariot, as will appear, when its interpretation has been given. Nothing therefore remains but, that it be referred to the wind, the regent of the third chariot, the interpretation of which exactly accords with whatever can be supposed to be the character of the spirit which inflated the wings of the women. And here it may modestly, not triumphantly, be asked; is there not good reason to believe, that an interpretation, which thus demonstrates the identity of the subjects represented by the same figures in different parts of the vision, and which, maintaining coherency, avoids confusion, must nearly have attained to the true meaning of the spirit of prophecy?

* By the law of Moses two witnesses were required, and were deemed sufficient, to substantiate any important fact.

If it should be objected, that the reformation has not even yet made its progress through the whole northern empire, it may be answered;

1. That the prophet's words neither assert nor intimate, that the course of the black horses is to be terminated, as soon as that of the white ones shall have commented; so that they give the reader reason to expect, rather a gradual and successive, than a sudden and immediate, restoration of true christianity in the north.
2. That the extent, to which the reformation has actually spread over Great Britain, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Prussia, and many states of Germany, is fully sufficient to warrant very large expressions as to its diffusion, and even to excuse any, which may fall short of universality.
3. That although the Romish church still occupies the larger portion of the northern territory, and remains still corrupt, superstitious, idolatrous, and tyrannical, yet that much light, much knowledge and sound doctrine have been by the reformation infused into the members of it; that it is in many places curtailed of much of its power; that it is now ashamed to avow some of its tenets and afraid to assert many of its pretensions.
4. That the course of the third chariot is yet far from being ended; and that we yet look for it to take a

far wider circuit, when Babylon shall have fallen; and before the final account of its operations shall be given in to the Lord of the whole earth.

IV. The fourth chariot.

And the grisled ones went forth to the land
7. of the south: And the dark brown ones went forth and sought to go, to go to and fro through the earth. And he said unto them, "Go, go to and fro through the earth." So they went to and fro through the earth.

Of the general signification of the word, rendered "grisled," or speckled, there cannot be any doubt: "sprinkled," says Kimchi, "with white, like hail*." By the same, the spotted cattle in Jacob's flock are twice described†. But to help us in fixing the qualities denoted by the colour of these horses, we cannot have recourse to scriptural authority; for a grisled, or speckled colour is no where else used in scripture as typical of qualities moral, political, or religious. We are therefore left to the exercise of our own judgement, in determining the signification of this part of the symbol. Now it is evident, at the first thought on the subject, that a speckled, or grisled colour, exhibited as a type, must denote somewhat of a motley nature, a mixture of incongruous qualities in the antitype;

* Cited by Bochart in Hierozoicon, vol. 1, col 109.

† Genesis, xxxi. 10, 12.

such as would be the character of a religion composed of true and false doctrines, right and wrong precepts, holy and unholy rites; and all these perhaps borrowed from various other systems and forms of worship, absurdly shuffled together, or forcibly bound up with new inventions. It is not difficult to imagine many combinations of these and of other attributes; but the nature of the subject requires, that religious doctrines and moral precepts should at least enter largely into them. Our imaginations, however, are not permitted to wander too far in conjecture, or to lose themselves in compounding and diversifying qualities at will. For although the horses are described to be grised or parti-coloured, and although the colours, that enter into the mixture, are not expressed, yet we are furnished by the context with sufficient means of supplying the omission.

The colours of the three preceding sets of horses are red, black, and white, and since these in the fourth chariot are said to be marked with a mixture of colours, without specifying what, the mind in inquiring after them naturally turns back to the preceding. This action of the mind is so obvious and so entirely to be expected, that the certainty of its taking place would almost supersede the necessity of direct information

even in a common narrative, and in the enigmatical style of a typical prophecy fully justifies and accounts for its omission. Now no reason can be assigned for the retention of one of those colours, in preference to another, and thence we are necessarily led to pronounce, that all the three are to be retained. But the character of the antitype must correspond to the colours of the type; and consequently the agents represented by the chariot with grised horses, must be distinguished by uniting the warlike attribute of the first chariot, with the mournful and darksome ones of the second, and with the christian one of the third; a most unexpected and truly wonderful combination; which, if it can be proved to have taken place, in consistency with the other conditions of time and territory, must at once stamp the interpretation with the seal of truth, and determine the prediction to be indeed the word of the all knowing and all ruling God.

The order of procession, as to the fourth chariot, does not indicate its period to be posterior to that of the third, or even the second. It took a different direction, and consequently the term of its circuit may be either wholly or partially contemporary with those allotted to them. We must therefore take notice of its direction, before we can pretend to ascertain the period of its procession.

The quarter, towards which the speckled horses bent their course, was the south. "The speckled horses," says the prophet, "went to the land of the south." It has been shewn before, that this is the phrase, by which Zechariah, or rather the interpreting angel, chooses to describe the Roman empire in the east, and that it is not in any respect less suitable to it, or less distinctive, than the other. It has been shewn also, that the parallel phrase, "the land of the north," in regard to one important object of the prophecy, the extension of the revived Roman empire, is even more agreeable to the truth of historical facts, than its common description, the western empire. The same thing will shortly appear in regard to the southern empire also.

We now return to the procession of this chariot. That not being referable to the order of the two immediately preceding ones, on account of its southern direction, it is necessary to recur to the period of the first chariot. The chief, though by no means the only human agents, signified by the horses of that chariot, in regard to the southern or eastern division of the Roman empire, were the Persians; whose formidable and reiterated invasions harassed, wasted, and depopulated it, as we have seen, for a long succession of years. In the early part of the seventh

century the armies of the great king had reduced the empire to the deepest distress and humiliation. But the awakened energies of the emperor Heraclius repelled and returned the blow, recovered the lost provinces, and retaliated the insult and the injury to the royal palace of Chosroes. The triumph of the emperor and the death of his enemy put an end to the conflict of the rival monarchies, a conflict which was never renewed. The procession then of the fourth chariot must be placed subsequently to the year 628, but as soon after that time, as may consist with the appearance of a power in the eastern empire, answerable to the type of the speckled horses as above explained.

Such a power is found in Mahomet, and his successors, the caliphs, and their Arabian hosts. They were warlike and successful in war to a very eminent degree, and consequently partook of the character of the red horses. In ten years Mahomet himself subdued the various tribes of Arabia; and his successors in a few years more extended their conquests over the Persian monarchy and over many Roman provinces. The course of such warriors must needs have been attended with lamentation and deep mourning. But they were also distinguished as the propagators of darkness, as the teachers and promul-

gators of a false religion ; which set aside the distinguishing truths of christianity, the divinity, the atonement, the propitiation, and sole mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the personality and offices of the Holy Ghost. They were therefore with great propriety represented by horses sprinkled with black. Yet was there a strong mixture of light and truth in the work of darkness and error : for Mahomet laid down and assiduously inculcated that fundamental and eternal doctrine of true religion, the unity of God ; whom he held up, as the sole object of religious service, worship, and praise. This he taught in opposition both to the Polytheism of the Arabians, and other heathen nations, and to the idolatrous worship of corrupted christians, which was directed to the virgin Mary, the martyrs, and other departed saints. He taught also the doctrine of a resurrection, a future judgment, and a state of rewards and punishments. Thereby the horses of the fourth chariot deserved to be distinguished by a mixture of white spots. But even these were mingled with a dark shade ; for while the impostor invested his hell with sufficient horrors, in attempting to describe the joys of heaven, he consulted rather the carnal ideas and passions of himself and of his countrymen, than the oracles of truth, or the dictates of

common sense, and made his paradise the seat of corporeal pleasure, the abode of ever-growing, never-sated sensuality. He also admitted the general truth of the Jewish and christian dispensations, but denied the genuineness of the holy scriptures. Hence, refusing to Jesus the title of the Son of God, he was enabled to set himself above him as a prophet, and in the place of the bible to produce his own koran, or book, which so long as it keeps in view the volume, which it pretends to supersede, sometimes rises into sublimity, and at others delivers the just and noble precepts of a pure morality; but when the author depends on his own genius and stores of knowledge, it often sinks into low, absurd, and puerile conceits, and degrades the moral duties, which it enforces, by a lamentable mixture of narrow notions and superstitious observances. But it is not my intention or concern to draw a full portrait of the koran. It is sufficient to say, that it is a compound of doctrines, precepts, and ceremonies, either borrowed from the old and new testaments, and from the notions and practices of the Arabians, or invented by the impostor himself. It is also associated intimately with war, not merely allowing it as a justifiable practice, in cases of necessity, but teaching it as the most important and essential duty of all

sincere and meritorious believers. He was commissioned*, as he declares, to subdue infidels to obedience by the power of the sword. "The sword," said the destroyer, "is the key of heaven and of hell; a drop of blood shed in the cause of God is of more avail than two months of fasting or prayer: whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven; at the day of judgement his wounds shall be resplendent, as vermilion, and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubim†."

Thus does the character of the Mahometans fully answer to the grisled or speckled colours of the fourth set of horses. The period also of the Mahometan conquests on the Roman empire and the territory, which they subdued, answer to the order of the procession of the fourth chariot and to the quarter whither it was seen to proceed. The former, as we have seen, must be dated subsequently to the year 628, when the last peace was concluded between the eastern empire and Persia. Accordingly that peace had

* Sole's Koran, chapters 8 and 9.

† Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. 9. p. 297. 8vo. The historian has not referred to the original passage in the Koran, which I do not remember to have read and am unable to find.

subsisted but little more than four years, when the host of Saracens fell upon the land of the south and invaded the Roman province of Syria. In the year 633 then is to be dated the procession of the fourth chariot. In that year the battle of Aiznadin was fought and the Romans defeated. In the following year Damascus was taken, and in the year 638 the conquest of Syria was completed. That of Egypt quickly followed. Africa was finally subdued in the year 709; and thereby the prediction was fully accomplished, so far as the speckled horses are concerned. For although the Gothic monarchy of Spain was overthrown by the lieutenants of the caliph in the year 713, and the kingdom almost wholly reduced to subjection, yet from its latitude, from its political relations, and still more from its physical boundaries, it is to be considered as forming a part of the northern or western empire, and consequently not included in the commission of those agents, who were sent to the land of the south.

And here it is to be observed, that no valid objection can hence be raised to the including of the African province in the southern land; for although it be true of Africa, that at the partition of the Roman empire, it went with the western portion, yet that merely political transfer will not avail to form it into the land of the

north. The mighty arm of the Mediterranean sea interposes its length and breadth, to cut it off from every portion of that territory; and its southern latitude assigns it, *vi termini*, to that half of the empire, when north and south are made the terms of division. Indeed it should seem, that the circumstance of the southern province of Africa having followed the fate of the eastern empire in the Mahometan invasions and conquests, is, in addition to that assigned before*, the very and proper reason, that moved the prophetic spirit to describe the partition of the Roman empire, as made by north and south, rather than west and east. It is at least difficult in the extreme, perhaps impossible, to invent any other form of language, by which the fact, that the African provinces should fall with the eastern empire into the circuit of the fourth chariot, shall be expressed with that compendious brevity, which conceals the future, while it so remains, and at the same time, with that unequivocal decisiveness, which strikes conviction through the mind, when the event is brought to solve the prediction.

But to the fourth chariot belonged a second set of horses. "In the fourth chariot were speckled horses, dark brown ones." They are

* Commentary p. 388.

properly called a second set of horses*; for if only one set had been harnessed to that car, consisting of one or more brown, mixed with the grisled, then doubtless the prophet would have prefixed the copulative letter, answering to "and" in English, and would have said, "grisled and brown ones." By omitting it he has shewn, that he intended to make some kind of distinction; and the nature and extent of that distinction are afterwards sufficiently explained by describing them in a very different manner; as taking indeed the same course with the former, but as entering upon it at a different time and under different circumstances. For it is said of the speckled ones, expressly and clearly, as it is of the preceding set, that "they went forth;" whereas of the brown ones it is hinted, that they found some impediment to their setting off. It is said that "they went forth and sought to go;" which could not have been said, had they gone with the others; wherefore it is certain that they were a different set of horses; and being such, they must necessarily have been harnessed to the chariot, upon the former being taken out. It

* I do not conceive, that there is any reason for considering this second set of horses, as the same with the *παρηγοροι, σιραινοι* or *σιραφοροι ιπποι* of the Greeks; for in that case, they would have accompanied the *ζυγιοι*, which it is evident from the description they did not do.

is true that neither of these operations is mentioned or even hinted at; but from the circumstances related it is evident, that both must have taken place; and under that necessity the mention of them is omitted in so brief a narrative.

The above argument also plainly proves, that the Hebrew word, above rendered dark brown, which in its proper and usual acceptation signifies strong, cannot be applied to the speckled horses in that sense, as an additional characteristic quality in them. For even if its usual signification were alone retained here, still, since the horses, to which it is applied, are described separately and with different circumstances from the former, it must be intended to distinguish thereby a different set of horses. But the four other sets of horses being all distinguished from each other by words of colour, it is very improbable, and indeed would be very incongruous, that the same mode of distinction should not be adhered to in the last instance*. Let us hear the judicious and convincing argument of Gussetius. "The

* Archbishop Newcome, upon the various readings of several manuscripts, forms a conjecture, that the true reading of the passage is בָּרִידִים חֲמֹרִים, by which he understands "parti-coloured horses," whose two colours are white and red. All the ancient versions in Walton's Polyglott, the Vulgate alone excepted, render חֲמֹרִים by a word of colour. The latter renders it "strong," (in which Aquila concurs,

word is certainly connected and arranged together with names of colours; nor will it be of any use to say, that to the noun of colour, by which the parti-coloured horses are described, this noun is added, denoting no more the colour but the strength of the same horses; for truly it appears, that the same horses are not denominated both parti-coloured and strong, because they are separated

rendering it *καρπός*;) and in the third verse admits the copulative *Vau*, et fortes. From the silence of the prophet, as to the quarter, toward which the first chariot proceeded the author of the Syriac seems to have formed a conjecture, that the second horses of the fourth chariot were the red ones of the first; and hence probably it is, that he has omitted to render *רומ* at all in the third verse, while in the seventh he has rendered it by *קצר*, the word by which he has rendered *רומ* in the second verse. Dr. Blaney follows the Vulgate, and seems to think, that by the colour, the Roman empire is denoted in its infancy and growing state, and by the epithet, "strong," in an advanced state of power rising to imperial and ecumenical dominion.

Bochart, *Hierozycon*, vol. 1, col. 111, (from which Archbishop Newcome has drawn,) is persuaded, that *רומ* must denote some kind of colour. From the interchange, which sometimes takes place, of the two gutturals, *ר* and *מ*, he is led to think it the same word with *רמן*, In Isaiah, lxiii. 1, which he contends, vi etymi, to signify a sharp, vivid, or bright red colour; *quorum rubor est* *סרפס*, et plus habet vigoris atque luminis. But there is no occasion to press so closely the signification of that root. The prophet himself explains the meaning to be a ruddy colour, like the juice of grapes in a wine-fat; and it afterwards appears to denote blood: "Wherefore art thou ruddy in thine apparel, and thy garments like those of him that treadeth the wine-press?" "Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments." The colour then I apprehend, is rather a dark, than a bright one, and will not depart far from a ruddy brown, such as is expressed by *טן*.

at the end of the sixth, and at the beginning of the seventh verse. But that these alone should be described, not by their colour, but by their strength, a quality, which is not opposed to the colours before specified, and which the reader may suppose to be consistent with any other colour in those other horses, is an incongruity by no means probable. For this reason the word is justly taken to denote some kind of colour, and of that kind, which would indicate the greater and firmer strength of the horses; so that the name is derived to the colour from the strength with which it is usually associated. But what that colour may be must be left to horse-jockies and grooms to decide.* To this argument I entirely accede; but having no better pretensions to form a judgement on this subject, than Gassetius, I have consulted a few persons conversant in horses, and have collected from them, that, all other points being supposed equal, the dark brown horse may generally be expected to turn out the strongest. It is likely, that there may be some fancy and some partial experience in this opinion; and it may be thought also, that the Jews may have been induced by authority, built on no firmer ground, to use a word expressing the quality of strength, for a dark brown colour, in

* Gassetii Comment. Ling. Heb. in v. p. 264.

respect to horses. But no slight argument may be drawn in favour of the opinion, that dark brown is the colour here meant, from the fact, that parti-coloured and brown are the colours, by which Jacob is related in Genesis, xxx and xxxi, to have divided the flock of Laban, according to the stipulation which he made with him for his wages. The former colour is there twice expressed by the same word, as that used here; so that considering the tacit mode of allusion, by which one text of scripture often refers to another, and that the word is no where else used in the same sense, it is reasonable to believe it to have been the intention of the prophetic spirit, that we should have recourse to the narrative in Genesis, and explain the other and more doubtful word in the prophet, by that, which is plain in the historian, and which certainly signifies a sun-burnt, or dark brown colour. But there is the stronger reason for being of this opinion, since Jacob appears to have considered dark brown to be the mark of soundness and vigour in cattle. For his hire, according to his proposal, was to consist of all the brown offspring of speckled parents among the sheep, and of all the speckled offspring of brown parents among the goats. This afforded at first sight a great prospect of advantage to Laban, it being

probable, according to the common course of nature that the colour of the offspring would in the greater number of instances follow that of the parents. Accordingly he was caught by the tempting offer, and endeavoured, as we know, to make the most of his advantage. Jacob, however, was equally awake as Laban to his own interest; and knowing what he was about to do, he effectually secured it. But in the view, which he took of his interest, there evidently appears to have been some idea of preference annexed to one of the two colours. Else, why the distinct arrangement in regard to sheep and goats? Had the colour been a matter of indifference, Jacob would doubtless have proposed, without regard to such a distinction, to take all the speckled offspring of brown parents; or vice versa, in both kinds of cattle; for he was not a man to be led by a mere whim, without prospect of gain, to make the terms of his bargain more intricate than necessary. But if one of the two colours were supposed to be the mark of superior strength and vigour, then he would certainly act, as we find he did, proposing an apparently equitable mode of splitting the difference, but taking care that the real advantage should fall to his own side. For foreseeing how Laban would catch at an offer, seemingly so favourable

in other respects, he was not afraid to stipulate, that his own portion of the better colour should consist of the better kind of cattle, which the sheep unquestionably were. Hence it appears, that a dark brown was, either generally supposed to be a preferable colour to speckled in cattle, or at least esteemed so to be in the judgment of that sagacious and experienced observer, Jacob himself. Assuming then, as we reasonably may, that the same preference of colour exists, or was anciently supposed to exist, in respect to horses, as in smaller cattle, we may venture to conclude upon the whole, that the word "strong," as denoting a distinctive quality in the second set of horses of the fourth chariot, is used as a word of colour, and that that colour is a dark brown, because it is considered to be the mark of strength in horses; and consequently that the colour of those horses indicates the strength of the agents represented by them.

Strength is a quality at once so common, and so various as to its degrees, in the subjects, of which it may be predicated, that it would form no striking distinction in an absolute sense. It must therefore be taken here relatively to the power, signified by the horses immediately preceding; that is to say, the second horses must be understood to be the symbols of human agents,

who, when they appear, ought to evince a degree of strength, either generally, or at least in some particular and eminent instance, paramount to what had before been manifested by the Mahometan Arabs. At the same time, they must be found closely connected with them; for the two sets of horses are harnessed to the same chariot, which, signifies, as we have seen, a course of events. Now, since the events, signified by this chariot, are the successful propagation of the imposture of Mahomet and the conquests made by his disciples, it follows, that the anti-types of these second horses must be found, like the Arabs, promoters and propagators of the religion of Mahomet; and that, moreover, by the same means, violence, war, and conquest. This deduction flows by such plain and necessary consequence from the nature and qualities of the types, and exhibits so remarkable a conjuncture of events, that if any power can be pointed out, whose religious principles and warlike achievements are answerable thereto, the credit of the prophecy will be set on the firmest foundation and the truth of the interpretation will be placed on a footing of almost equal certainty.

The description, thus drawn a priori, from the visionary types, corresponds both generally and in all its points to the historical character of the Turks.

They are harnessed, we may say, to the car of Mahomet, they are fanatically devoted to his religion; his koran is their text book, not only for theological doctrines and moral precepts, but for municipal law and foreign policy, and the infallible interpretation of it is lodged in the sultan, who thus occupies the place of caliph, or lieutenant of the prophet. They also endeavour to support and propagate his imposture by the same means, as he originally used with his Arabian tribes, by force of arms and bloodshed: "In the hand of the Turks," says Mr. Gibbon, "the sword was the only instrument of conversion*."

But the Turks, while they have resembled the Saracens in their blind belief and zealous propagation of the Mahometan imposture, have manifested a degree of solid strength and vigour far superior to theirs, in the founding, rearing, and spreading of their empire. The power exerted and displayed by the Arabians was rather a series of violent and temporary efforts, than the gradual and sustained advances of a mighty nation rising to greatness and empire. After their first century of conquest, the dominion of the caliphs ceased to rest upon Arabian prowess; the caliphate itself was divided; the divisions

* Decline and Fall, vol. 12, p. 161. 8vo.

were hostile; amid peace and peaceful arts the true character of the Moslem, the character of destruction, by degrees dissolved; "and the Bedoween of the desert," says Mr. Gibbon; "awakening from their dream of dominion, resumed their old and solitary independence." The history of the Turkish power exhibits a far different picture. We find it rising from small beginnings, increasing day by day, strengthened; rather than injured, by the timely cropping of its luxuriant shoots, withheld, as it were, by the hand of prudent superintendancy, till it had acquired the maturity of vigour: and then advancing both rapidly and steadily in the career of victory and dominion.

Moreover, there was a point, a grand point; towards which the Arabian caliphs, more than once, directed their utmost efforts, the conquest of the eastern empire, and the capture of Constantinople. But to this their power was found inadequate, and they were repulsed from the imperial city with loss and shame. In this very point then the superior strength of the Turks was preeminently conspicuous. They subdued in the course of years the Asiatic and European provinces of the empire, which they at length totally and finally subverted by the capture of Constantinople. From their first appearance to

the people of the eastern empire almost eight hundred years have rolled away; four hundred of them had elapsed, before they could accomplish the object of their labours, of which they have now retained possession for almost four hundred years more. This long duration of their power is a sufficient proof of its solidity; and it is therefore with great propriety, that they are represented by horses of the colour of strength, drawing the car of the Arabian prophet, with a power and steadiness of exertion far beyond the violent, but transitory, efforts of his original Saracenic followers.

It is obviously unnecessary to notice the order of procession in respect to these horses; and almost as little needs to be said, as to the quarter, toward which they were guided; for although it is not expressly asserted, that the brown horses took the same course as the speckled ones, yet since they are yoked to the same chariot and nothing is used to the contrary, there cannot be the least question, as to the intention of the prophet, that we should so conceive of it. At the same time, it is to be understood generally; not in regard to all the particular details. Indeed the interpretation above given necessarily supposes some extension of their circuit; for in vain would these horses be distinguished by a colour denoting

superior strength, if it were not intended to indicate thereby, that they took the war in a wider range, than their predecessors. Nor is it any objection, that in the instances of the Persian, Spanish, and some other conquests, the Arabs considerably surpassed the Turks in the extent of their victorious career; not because those conquests have passed away from their hands, but because those instances are of no importance to the interpretation of the prophecy; inasmuch, as they exceeded the bounds of the commission there assigned to the fourth chariot, which was confined to the land of the south, or eastern empire.

Since then the characters of the Arabian and Turkish Mahometans are found to correspond to the colours of the two sets of horses, which are successively harnessed to the fourth chariot, and since the scene of their exploits agrees with the course, which that chariot is described as pursuing, nothing remains, but to explain an important circumstance attending the last horses, which before has been only mentioned incidentally.

“And the dark brown ones went forth and sought to go, to go to and fro,” or to take their circuit in the land. “And he said, Go, go to and fro,” take your circuit in the land. “So

they went to and fro," they took their circuit in the land. The dark brown horses are here evidently represented, as held under restraint; they "sought to go, to go to and fro," but were unable to enter freely upon their course, until the word of command was given by the interpreting angel, who performed this high act of authority, as part of his interpretation. This circumstance immediately brings to mind the parallel one in the vision of St. John, relative to the same power. At the sounding of the sixth trumpet* four angels were seen bound in the river Euphrates, until the command was given for their release. In conformity with these prophetic figures we learn from history, that the Turkish forces made many attempts and destructive incursions upon the eastern empire, but were not permitted to make permanent conquests upon it, until the establishment of the house of Othman. In the year 1050 they first appeared on the Armenian frontier of the empire under the command of Togrul Beg, and marked their course with the blood of 130000 christians†. "But the torrent of barbarians quickly rolled away; the sultan retired without glory or success from the siege of an Armenian city; the obscure hostilities were continued or suspended with a

* Revelation, ix. 14.

† Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. 10, p. 351. See

yicissitude of events: and the bravery of the Macedonian legions renewed the fame of the conqueror of Asia." Sixteen years after this attempt, his nephew Alp Arslan conquered Armenia and Georgia, and took captive in battle the emperor Romanus Diogenes; but it is very remarkable, that in the treaty of peace which followed, the Turkish conqueror did not extort from his prisoner the surrender of any portion of his dominions. Between the years 1074 and 1084 Soliman erected the Turkish kingdom of Roum upon the conquest of Asia Minor; but it vanished in less than fifteen years before the host of the crusaders. Thus did the Turkish horses go forth and seek to go to and fro in the land of the south; but their efforts were checked and limited for two hundred years. The prodigious armies and extensive conquests of the Moguls under Zingis Khan and his successors had also the effect of restraining the Turkish arms and ambition: but this restraint lasted not long; it was removed almost together with the failure or cessation of the crusades; soon after which, "the decline of the Moguls," says Mr. Gibbon, "gave a free scope to the rise and progress of the Ottoman empire*." That empire grew up into its might by a rapid succession of conquests;

* Decline and Fall. vol. 11, p. 431. 8vo.

In the year 1299 Othman first invaded the eastern empire, and his son Orchan completely subdued the whole extent of Asia Minor. About the middle of the fourteenth century the Othman Turks were established in Europe; and before the end of it little of the empire remained to its nominal master, beyond the walls of Constantinople. The sultan Bajazet seemed to be on the very point of entering that capital, which he already claimed as his own; but almost in the expected hour of acquisition the progress of Turkish pride and power was again arrested by an irresistible arm. From the recesses of the east Timour led his innumerable squadrons of Tartars into the heart of the Turkish dominions; and in the decisive battle of Angora Bajazet lost his army, his empire, and his liberty. By the victory of Timour Constantinople was relieved and the fall of the eastern empire was suspended for about fifty years. But the blow which the Turkish power received from the hands of the Tartar, though severe and heavy, was not fatal. "The massy trunk," says Mr. Gibbon, "was bent to the ground, but no sooner did the hurricane pass away, than it again arose with fresh vigour and more lively vegetation." After some years of disunion and confusion the Ottoman power and sceptre were reunited in the person of Mahomet

the first; and thenceforward the Turkish arms proceeded without sustaining farther reverse or check, till in the year 1453 they completed the downfall of the eastern empire, by the capture of Constantinople. As the detail here given shews the superior strength of the dark brown horses, arising undiminished in spirit and prowess from so many checks, so it fully explains the meaning and justifies the interpretation of those expressions, by which they are represented as curbed and withheld from accomplishing their grand object, until the permission was given them from heaven. Then they went to and fro, they took their full circuit free and unfettered in the land of the south; for then the Othman Turks obtained the supreme dominion of the eastern empire in its whole extent, which they have ever since retained.

After this the angel once more summoned the attention of the prophet to the state of things in the northern portion of the empire.

8. Then he summoned me*, and spake unto me, saying, "See, those that go to the north country, have caused my spirit to rest in the north country."

These words are certainly those of the interpre-

* See the word so used in Joshua, viii. 16, Judges, iv. 10, 13, xii. 2, 2 Samuel, xx. 4, 5.

ting angel; no other speaker being mentioned or hinted at, since he replied to the prophet in the fifth verse. This Dr. Blaney allows; but he tells us, that the angel "spake by God's authority." Doubtless he did; and not only these words, but whatever else he spake throughout the vision. The truth is, that the learned professor must here have meant more than he has expressed; or he must have used the terms, "by the authority," in the same sense, as if he had said, "in the person, or in the name, of God." Such a sense is absolutely necessary to uphold his rendering and interpretation of the angel's words; "have made my wind to rest,"—"have inflicted my judgement;" which he interprets of "the sore calamity, which the Persians inflicted or caused to rest on the land of the Chaldees." Now if the angel had thus spoken in the *person* of God, he could be no other, than the second person in the trinity, the Word of God: but it has been proved before, that the interpreting angel has no claim to that supreme dignity; and Dr. Blaney himself would at once disclaim it for him. Again, if he had spoken only in the *name* of God, then doubtless he would have introduced the divine declaration by that common form, "Thus saith the Lord;" a form, in the use of which, considering the remarkable conciseness of his narrative,

Zechariah is by no means sparing; and which would have been found particularly necessary here, if Jehovah were indeed the speaker. It appears therefore, that we have no warrant for believing, that the angel here spake in the person, or in the name, of God.

Farther; even if we could follow Dr. Blaney in his interpretation of the four chariots, and of the angel's declaration in relation to the second and third of them, it would be exceedingly arbitrary; since the second chariot was succeeded by the third on the same ground, the north country, to pronounce with him, that the divine judgement there alluded to, is that represented by the former, rather than by the latter, of the two. Neither would it be very agreeable to any idea, implied in the word "rest," to suppose, that two judgements having been inflicted on the same territory, the inflicter, when he declares, that his agents had caused his judgement to rest upon it, should mean thereby, not the latter and final, but the former; the effects of which may with some reason be thought, if not to have ceased, at least to have abated, or to have been in a great measure absorbed and forgotten in the recent severity of the latter infliction.

Moreover, since it is admitted, that the speaker is not the interpreting angel, and it has been

shewn, that he does not speak in the person, or in the name of God, therefore he cannot, speaking of one of the four winds of heaven, call it "my wind." The word consequently must be taken in its common, though metaphorical, acceptation, for the spirit of the person denoted by the affixed pronoun, that is to say, for the spirit of the angel himself, which he says the horses, that proceeded to the north country, have caused to rest there, meaning, with satisfaction and complacency; or as our English version, rightly, though not quite literally, has it, "have quieted my spirit*." The heavenly host are represented in scripture, as taking deep concern in the fate of men. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth†;" and they "desire," they are fain, or delight, "to look into the sufferings of Christ and the glories that follow‡;" led thereto doubtless by their tender compassion for the souls of men. If therefore the course of the second and third chariots pre-

* Mr. Lowth observes that the Hebrew word, Ruach, spirit often signifies anger, and cites Judges, viii. 3, Eccles. x. 9, in proof; the latter of which passages does not contain the word. But there is nothing said here, that can warrant us in imposing upon it a sense, which it can derive only from the context.

† Luke, xy. 10.

‡ 1. Peter. i. 11, 12. See Schlensker in *synonyma*.

dicted the welfare of the church and the defeat of its enemies, the angel might well say, that they, who went to the north country, caused his spirit to rest there; to expatiate with delight in the contemplation of the glory of God and the good of man. He might also, with equal propriety, express himself in the same terms, if the latter only of the two afforded so happy a prospect; because then the prediction would terminate happily. But if only the second chariot foreboded good and the third evil, or even events merely foreign and indifferent, to the church, it is not easy to see, with what propriety he could use terms expressive of satisfaction, seeing that the period of felicity was to be succeeded by, and to end in one of calamity; or if not, at least by a series of events, that would afford no ground for comfort or rejoicing. His declaration therefore must relate to the course of the third chariot, either taken alone, if the second betoken evil, or combined with it, if good.

And now, if we apply the words of the angel to the interpretation above given of the four chariots, we shall find them most apt to the times and the circumstances, then under representation. Having just witnessed with suitable feelings of grief and indignation, the course of the dark brown horses, in might and pride

hurrying on the desolating car of the false prophet over the south country, the angel with great and signal satisfaction, called the attention of Zechariah to the north, which presented to view the far different and happier, yet contemporary, scene of the white horses drawing the triumphal chariot of the reformation. Certainly nothing can be imagined more likely to refresh and exhilarate the spirit of an angel of heaven, than the view of that great spiritual revolution, rising in light and glory to chase away the thick darkness of popery from one half of the christian world, and in its progress keeping pace with the march of those destroyers, the Turks, successfully propagating the parti-coloured religion of Mahomet by force and bloodshed. It will repay the trouble we may take, if we briefly compare a few particular periods, in which the contemporary steps of the protestant reformation and the Turkish power may be clearly traced.

1. At the time, when Amurath the first was reducing the European part of the Greek empire to subjection, the illustrious Wickliff was exposing the corruptions of popery, unlocking the scriptures, and teaching the doctrines of the reformation to come, in England. 2. The capture of Constantinople took place in 1453; but that was just at the

notable era of the invention of printing, which became the grand instrument in the hand of God for dispelling the accumulated gloom of manifold ignorance, deep rooted falsehood, and long established tyranny, and restoring the knowledge of true religion, attended by science, by liberty, and by every virtue and every grace both of private and of social life. 3. While Solyman the magnificent, in all his high prosperity, consolidated the strength of the Ottoman empire and extended its boundaries, Luther and his brethren, the reformers, made successful war on the empire of darkness, republished the gospel in truth and purity, and reestablished the true kingdom of Christ over the land of the north. 4. Towards the end of the sixteenth century the Ottoman power attained to the highest pitch of its strength and splendour, when Amurath the third, in 1587, reduced Persia to the necessity of suing for peace. No doubt the Turks made several conquests afterwards, and those of considerable importance, particularly Bagdad, and also Candia and Caminie; but after the close of the sixteenth century their power began to be on the wane, so that about, or soon after the year 1587, the empire of the Porte may be considered as having attained the zenith of its substantial greatness. But that was also the period, when by the defeat

of the Spanish Armada the protestants were freed from the dangers and the fears of a general persecution, and their religion was established on a solid and permanent foundation. From that time the Turks have ceased to conquer, nor has the protestant church enlarged its boundaries by any national additions. Of course it is not meant to say, that all the above points of comparison are specially predicted in the words of the angel. But it is evident that he intended to turn the thoughts of the prophet from the scene of Mahometan imposture, flourishing with the advancement of the Ottoman empire, to the contrast which the progress of the third chariot opened to view, in the propagation and establishment of truth, morality, and liberty; and since the angel's words were certainly recorded for our instruction, we may consider ourselves, as summoned with Zechariah to contemplate the same subject; which we could not more profitably do, than by comparing some of the different stages, through which the two chariots synchronically passed in their career.

PART IX.

CAP. VI. 9—15.

WE are now arrived at the last portion of this truly admirable prophecy. It can hardly be called the last part or scene of the vision, since there is not any celestial or symbolical appearance described in it, but a command alone is related to have been communicated by divine revelation to the prophet, to be performed by him accordingly.

9. And the word of Jehovah came unto me,
10. saying, "Take *some** of the captivity, *one*

* The prefix נ is often used partitively, with nouns of the plural number and nouns of multitude, as here, where the captivity signifies those, who had returned from the Babylonian captivity. Take some part or number of them; which number is immediately afterwards defined to be one of the family of Heldai, and of the others named. But it is very rarely found prefixed in this sense to proper names. Yet we have an instance of it in Numbers, xxiv. 19. $\text{וְיֶדֶד מִיַּעֲקֹב}$, "and one from Jacob," or one of the house of Jacob, (for אֶחָד is understood and נ seems to be used, not only partitively, but elliptically also, for מִבְּנֵי ;) "shall

of the family of Heldai, one of Tobijah, and one of Jedaiah, and go thou this day, and enter into the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah, who are come from Babylon*."

reign." Another instance is found in 2 Chronicles, xx. 4. "And Judah assembled לבקש מן־ה' to seek from the Lord." Our translation inserts "help;" perhaps, a word, דבר, would have been better; but it seems yet more agreeable to the context, to understand אש, and to consider the prefix as put elliptically for מבני; for in answer to their petition the prophet Jahaziel immediately appears. Dr. Blaney conceives the ה to be redundant or expletive in this place, and appeals to Noldius for instances of this use of it before accusatives. He gives eight, of which, however, only one, that above cited from 2 Chronicles, xx. 4, is a proper name, not one is decisive, and hardly any at all to the purpose. Besides, in the instance before us, if the particle be taken as merely expletive, or as forming a periphrasis accusativi, when prefixed to the proper names, it must be taken for the same, when prefixed to מן־ה' and מן־ה' and מן־ה'; yet Dr. Blaney has there rendered it partitively; as the sense of the text plainly requires. We ought then to give it the same sense with the proper names, understanding with each of them אש, a man, because the individuals to be taken are afterwards specified, and we find them to be no more than three, one from each of the three houses above mentioned. Archbishop Secker, quoted by Archbishop Newcome, observes, that "what shall be taken is not said, till the next verse:" whence he seems to have thought, that silver and gold were to be taken from the persons named, and were consequently the words to be understood before ה, and then the beginning the next verse must be rendered, "yea," or "even." But, as Dr. Blaney justly observes, "the prophet is not required to take the silver and gold from the persons named, but to take them," or rather the persons afterwards named, of their families, "as witnesses of what he was going about."

* Our translators have removed this last clause from the end of the verse, where it is found in the original Hebrew and in all the ancient versions, and have placed it after the names of the persons above mentioned. They were undoubt-

Zechariah is commanded to collect that very day a small number of those persons, who had returned from the captivity in Babylon. The number is in all four. Three persons are first described, merely as members of their fathers' houses, as if the choice of the individuals had been left to Zechariah; though it was not so, because we afterwards find them particularly named. With those three he is directed to go into the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah, where they will find another individual, afterwards named, who is to be joined, as a witness, with the former, and to be a partaker in the high honour done them.

11. "And take silver and gold and make crowns*,"

edly led to do this by the verb being in the plural number, **באו**, which has for its nominative the relative **אשר**, seemingly referring to the individual Josiah or Zephaniah. The difficulty arising from the plural verb, has been long ago felt, for the LXX, Syriac, Arabic, and Chaldee have rendered it in the singular number, as if they had read **בא**, which is the reading of a single manuscript, formed probably by conjecture, and which Dr. Blaney prefers. But if we consider the relative to refer, as it certainly may, or rather must, to the two individuals Josiah and his father Zephaniah, the grammar will be easy and the sense clear. In their house, it should seem, that Joshua the high-priest resided, and there too Zechariah would find the other person, who is mentioned in the fourteenth verse.

* The word **עטרת** here appears in the plural number, written in full. But six manuscripts read **עטרת**, which may be the singular number; and the Syriac and Chaldee, with

Probably the prophet was to take the silver and gold with him to Josiah's house, as he might not find such materials there, unless the matter had been previously arranged, which the shortness of the notice shews to be very unlikely. We are not, however, to imagine, that the metals were to be taken in the mass or ingot, and

three manuscripts and one edition of the LXX render in that number. In the fourteenth verse the word occurs without the Vau and is connected with a verb in the singular number, which seems to give some support to the various reading before mentioned. Dr. Blaney, in his note, does not venture to determine, whether the singular or plural is to be preferred, but in his text he translates in the singular. Nevertheless, since the great majority of manuscripts read in the plural form fully written, and the LXX, (for what signify three manuscripts and one edition?) the Vulgate, and the Arabic render agreeably thereto, the commonly received reading is still to be esteemed the genuine one; especially since the other is likely to have arisen from the abbreviated form of writing and from the use of the singular verb in the fourteenth verse. As to the Chaldee paraphrast, although he has rendered the noun in the singular, the probability is, that he read it with the Vau; for he has rendered it, not simply, a crown, but כִּלְיָרָב, a GREAT crown, in conformity with the rule laid down by Hebrew grammarians, that some nouns singular have their termination in ם, to augment the force of their signification; although there does not appear to be any reason here for that, since the meaning of the symbolical act would not be rendered clearer, or expressed more forcibly, by the superior magnitude of the crown. I therefore claim the Chaldee as a witness for the common reading, which, notwithstanding his gloss, is without doubt in the plural number. The difficulty of the construction in the fourteenth verse (see the note there) may be obviated without having recourse to any alteration of the text, or to the supposition, that מִלְיָה is a noun singular. At any rate there should be; as Dr. Blaney observes, an uniformity in the two verses.

wrought by the prophet and his companions, or by others, at his order, into royal diadems*. Neither the mode of expression nor the substance of the command require us to suppose more, than that Zechariah took a sufficient quantity of gold and silver wire or twist, and then plaited or interwove them into wreathes or fillets. The number of crowns is not specified; but was doubtless four; one for each of the four persons, whose names are recorded in the fourteenth verse. No objection, except as mentioned and obviated in the foregoing note, seems to lie against the number four, unless it be taken from the great cost of so many crowns. But such objection evidently supposes them to be of a solid, massive make; and that is done away by the far more simple and probable opinion, that no such magnificent and elaborate ornaments are intended, but only, as just mentioned, plaited wreathes of wire or twist, which it would not require the

* Dr. Blaney, however, supposes as much; and moreover, that Josiah was "a working goldsmith lately arrived from Babylon." The supposition is purely gratuitous; and I venture to suppose on the other hand, though ignorant of the art of working in metals, that to form the proper moulds, to fuse and cast the two metals, and then to rivet them together and cut and polish them properly into a massive royal crown, (for Dr. Blaney supposes that only one, or perhaps two are to be made,) would require a considerably longer space of time, than the words of the prophet seem to allow for the purpose.

dexterity of an artificer to work into the form required.

But perhaps, since the command was to do an act purely symbolical, it terminated in itself, and never was carried, or meant to be carried, into execution; as in 1 Kings, xix. 15, 16, Elijah is commanded to perform certain unctions, yet we never read that he actually performed them. So too in Jeremiah, xxv. 15; that prophet is commanded to make many nations drink of the cup of God's anger; but although he formally tells us, that he took the cup, and made the nations and their sovereigns, to a very great number, drink of it, yet we are not to understand the narrative, as relating a thing either commanded or done in a literal sense; but only as a strong figure denoting the certainty of those severe denunciations of divine vengeance, which Jeremiah predicted against them. In like manner here, the command to do a symbolical act, though it extend no farther than the command, is as perfect in the representation of the thing denoted thereby, as if the execution of it had been literally and formally recorded.

“And set *them* upon the head of Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high-priest.”

The four crowns, or coronary fillets, being made, are all to be set on the head of one person,

Joshua, the high-priest, who appeared so conspicuous in the fourth scene of the vision. The intention of this coronation, whether actually performed or not, was both to determine more explicitly the real and glorious person typified by Joshua in the fourth scene, and also to represent him in those circumstances of majesty and splendour, in which, at the conclusion of the events denoted by the four chariots, he is destined to appear.

12. "And speak unto him, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the **BRANCH**; for He shall **BRANCH** forth out of his place; and shall
13. build the temple of Jehovah. Even **HE** shall build the temple of Jehovah: Even **HE** shall bear up the majesty, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and shall be priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them two."

That the words are utterly inapplicable to Joshua personally, is too certain to need any proof; nor among the sons of men is any one to be found, to whom they can be applied, save only our Lord Jesus Christ. He shall be called, that is, he shall in substance be, or he shall eminently deserve to be called, the **BRANCH**, by which name he was introduced in the fourth part of

the vision, though immediately afterwards represented under the figure of the stone engraved with the seven mystic eyes; by whom the iniquity of the land was removed; that righteous BRANCH; which, according to the prediction of Jeremiah*, was to be "raised up unto David, was to reign and prosper as king, executing judgement and justice in the land; in whose days Judah was to be saved and Israel to dwell safely; and whose name was to be called JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

For although Isaiah predicts that "he shall grow up as a tender plant," and as a root out of a dry ground, weak and inglorious in his early state, yet it is also predicted, that he shall flourish and spread abroad like a cedar in Lebanon; or as "the noble vine," which "spread wide her branches unto the sea and her shoots unto the river," yea, like the tree in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, "the height whereof reached unto the heaven and the sight unto the end of all the earth, the leaves whereof were fair and the fruit much, and in it was meat for all." Though "his place†,"

* Jeremiah, xxiii. 5, 6, xxxiii. 15, 16.

† Dr. Hales, in his Analysis of Ancient Chronology, vol. 2, p. 517, has rendered the word *mittan*, "even from beneath," in which rendering the ancient versions and our English translators in their margin concur. In that sense it must be referred to the interment of our Lord; and it may be thought, that he himself alluded to it in that passage

his proper peculiar realm, be the kingdom of David and Solomon, yet his dominion shall stretch far beyond the narrow confines of their ancient monarchy: he shall shake his sceptre over the nations, and shall set all their crowns together upon his victorious brow. The number four often denotes totality and perfection; and accordingly the four crowns set upon the head of Joshua are probably intended to betoken the whole spiritual sovereignty of King Messiah over all the peoples, that first and last shall be gathered unto him, from the time, that the company on their white horses set out on their expedition, to the happy period, when the third chariot, with its white horses, shall have accomplished its course. It is true, that at the end of the vision the third chariot did not appear to have proceeded farther in its course, than to the permanent establishment of the protestant faith; and that the brown horses were left in the full career of Turkish domination, while no "workman" of dismay and ex-

in St. John's gospel, xii. 24, where he speaks of his own burial and resurrection, and the fruits thereof, under the figure of wheat buried in the ground and growing up. But the allusion is too distant, and the whole sense seems too far fetched and refined. I have therefore adhered to the text of our English version, in which Archbishop Newcome and Dr. Blaney agree.

pulsion was exhibited, as about to "fray them away." But now, on the solemn coronation of the Branch with the fourfold crown of ecumenical dominion, the necessity of the case obliges us to infer, both that the third chariot had accomplished its course in the land of the north, and that the land of the south also had been previously delivered, or at least was immediately on the point of being delivered, from the desolating circuit of the Mahometan and Turkish car, and to return under the obedience of a true faith to its spiritual and divine sovereign; so that he had thoroughly accomplished the conquest and subjection of the fourth horn, in both its divisions, and in that state of things respectively to each of them, which is betokened by the second and by the fourth chariots. It is deserving of notice, that the Revelation of St. John itself, though it brings forward the reformation, as the long oppressed; but finally triumphant foe of popery, is yet altogether silent, as to the power, by which the Turkish empire is to be overthrown, however certainly that overthrow may be otherwise predicted. May we venture, in the silence of the prophets, to indulge the pleasing hope, that the regeneration of the land of the south has actually commenced in the present struggles of Greece: and that the

genuine natives of the soil, opening their eyes to the light, that streams upon them, and laying aside the superstitious and idolatrous vanities, to which they are not bound, as Romanists are, by the paramount authority of an infallible church, will rise up in the true spirit of christians, as well as freemen, and vindicate their claims to be, not only the sons of heroic ancestors, but the children of the churches planted by the apostles of the Lord?

Thus the imagery in this vision precisely corresponds with that in St. John's Revelation; where the rider on a white horse, having received a crown, goes forth conquering and to conquer, and at the close of the book appears again at the head of the armies in heaven, also mounted on white horses, in glory, having MANY CROWNS on his head.

It is next predicted that this glorious, wide-reigning king, shall, like another Solomon, build the temple of Jehovah; and our attention is fixed and rivetted on this circumstance by the emphatical repetition of the declaration; "even HE shall build the temple of Jehovah." The Jews being then so earnestly engaged and deeply interested in building the temple, the emphasis of the repetition is exceedingly striking, intimating at once a different master-builder and a

different building. "Even He," not Zerubbabel, "shall build the temple of Jehovah," of course a temple not of that building, which, as Zerubbabel had founded, so was he to finish; but an entirely new one, a temple infinitely exceeding that and every other earthly temple in value and excellency, as also in extent, even that "spiritual house," that "tabernacle not made with hands," of which "He is himself the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." In this holy and glorious palace, it is declared, that he shall bear up the majesty, the majesty of empire and supreme dominion, as king of Israel, the whole Israel of God. Accordingly He declared to his apostles, that "all power was given unto him in heaven and in earth;" and St. Paul describes him as supereminently exalted "above every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come." Ephesians, i. 20, and following, Philippians, ii. 9—11. Dr. Blaney remarks that the Hebrew word here used "signifies the glory, the honour, and authority belonging to a sovereign or chief ruler. So when Moses was directed to give up his command and authority to Joshua, it is said, "and thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him." Numbers, xxvii. 20." The word is yet more pointedly

used for royal dignity and majesty in 1 Chronicles, xxix. 25, and Daniel, xi. 21. But the word "receive," (He shall receive glory,) as adopted by Archbishop Newcome and others from the version of the LXX, seems much too weak and frigid for the tone and spirit of the passage. The Branch, at his first entrance on the work of preaching the kingdom of God, even at his baptism, "received honour and glory from God the Father;" and again, "when there came such a voice from the excellent glory," as that recorded by the evangelists and alluded to by St. Peter in his second epistle. But He is here represented, not at the commencement of his kingdom, but in the full glory of it completed and consummated upon earth; and therefore he is described, not merely as receiving, but bearing up, raising aloft, and extolling its majesty to the highest pitch, as God, "taking unto himself his great glory and reigning," with visible grandeur, at least with striking demonstrations, that the sceptre of the world is actually in his hand.

Accordingly it is next predicted of him, "and he shall sit and rule upon his throne;" to which it is added, that he "shall be priest upon his throne." The coronation, however, is celebrated in respect, not of his priesthood, but of his kingdom only. This is evident, not merely

because the ceremony is proper rather to kings than to priests, but because Joshua, the representative of the Branch, was already high-priest, and in that respect the coronation did not add any thing to him. Just so our Lord, from the time that "he offered himself a sacrifice for sin once," became high-priest over the whole house of God; and therefore the many crowns, here gathered on his head, are intended to represent, not his elevation to pontifical dignity, nor even any increase of his royal rights, but only, that he is from that time forth received, acknowledged, and obeyed as king by those, who had before spurned at his authority. From this representative investiture of the high-priest with the emblems of royalty, we are farther taught, that in the highest exaltation of his glory as king, the Branch will not lose, or lay aside, or forget his office of high-priest; but in Him the judgement of the one will be mitigated by the intercession of the other; so that he will appear in the full perfection of the twofold character of Melchisedek. "He was to be exalted," says Dr. Blaney, "to the right hand of God, there to sit upon his throne, as a king, governing his church, and as a priest, making intercession continually for it. It is impossible," he continues, "not to see, that this prophecy was completed in Christ, so as it never

could be in any other ; and therefore it must be understood of him ;"—and that, at the period ascertained by the order of the prediction, when he shall be shining forth in the fulness of the glory of both those characters.

"And the counsel of peace shall be between them two;" not between the two characters of king and priest, as might be supposed*, but between the Jewish and Gentile branches of the christian church ; for in scripture things eminent, or well known, or repeatedly mentioned, are often alluded to by emphatical pronouns, as "that day," "that hour." At the period when the four chariots shall have finished their course, and the true faith of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be fully, unequivocally, and securely confessed and maintained by the whole body of his Church, a new and final coalition shall take place between the remnant of the ancient people of God and the Gentile christians. They shall both "rejoice together;" "The princes of the earth shall be joined to the people of the God of Abraham;" "The counsel of peace shall be between them two." They shall lay aside and forget their

* So Mr. Lowth, the commentator, does suppose. Archbishop Newcome thinks it is between Zerubbabel and Joshua, as if either the one or the other personally could be here meant ; and Dr. Hales, that it is between the Lord and the Branch.

jealousies, their animosities, and all their previous disputes and dissensions. They shall be two no more; but melted down and amalgamated into one body; they shall renew, in a more illustrious manner, at the restoration of Jerusalem, that consolidation and union, which took place after her desolation. The language used by St. Paul on the same subject is so similar, that it seems to be either studiously adopted from, or adapted to, that of Zechariah, especially in regard to the use of the word, "both," or the two: "He is our peace, who hath made both, or the two, one;"—"to make in himself of twain, one new man, making peace;"—"and that he might reconcile both, or the two, in one body by the cross;"—"and came and preached peace to you, which were afar off, and to them, that were nigh;"—"for through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father*." Our blessed Lord himself first declared this counsel of peace, when he received the Syrophenician woman and the Roman centurion; he also plainly asserted that he had other sheep, which were not of the Israelitish fold, whom he must bring, who would hear his voice, and become, with his ancient people, one fold under one shepherd. The prediction of Zechariah points to the grand and final, but yet future,

* Ephesians, ii. 14—18.

accomplishment of the work so long ago and so happily begun.

14. "And as to* the crowns, one shall be for Helem, and one for Tobijah, and one for Jedaiah, and one for Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of Jehovah."

Hence it plainly appears that the number of crowns was four, a number indicative of totality and perfection, and accordingly emblematical of Messiah's kingdom. If the command were intended for actual performance, the crowns, after being set on Joshua's head, were to be distributed to the four persons above named, and by them placed for a memorial in the new, rising temple. They were to suspend them, we may suppose, therein, with their names in some manner affixed or appended to them, in attestation of the fact,

* According to the Hebrew grammarians, the singular verb ought to be construed with the plural noun, (which is written defectively, as the want of the Vau could not occasion ambiguity here, the word having appeared at length in the eleventh verse,) by an ellipsis of אחד, and taken in a distributive signification. But in rendering the passage I have preferred to make אחד the nominative absolute and to understand אחד for the nominative of the verb, repeating it before every name. אחד is used in this distributive sense in 1 Samuel, x. 3; and in Ezekiel. xlviii. 23 and following, the very construction, here required, may be found with אחד expressed, and is actually followed by Archbishop Newcome, in his translation of that prophet. The singular verb being thus construed, plainly shews, that the number of crowns was neither greater nor less than four; and this made it unnecessary to express the number.

that they had seen Joshua, the high-priest crowned by the hand of the prophet, at the command of God, with those four crowns. If only a single crown, according to Dr. Blaney's supposition, were to be thus suspended in the temple, it is indeed easy to imagine, that the names of all the four witnesses would be affixed thereto. But, exclusively of the idea of imperial dominion conveyed by many crowns, the testimony was doubtless intended to survive the witnesses; and that would certainly be delivered in, and handed down, with much stronger decision and emphasis, if each witness, speaking by his proper crown, should severally attest the fact.

In order to make the fourteenth verse agree with the tenth, it has been proposed, upon the authority of the Syriac version alone, to alter Helem into Heldai, and Hen into Josiah; both which alterations Archbishop Newcome has actually received into the text. Dr. Blaney has followed him with respect to the former, but thinks the difference between the names, Josiah and Hen*, too great, to "suppose, that the one could be accidentally substituted for the other."

* In this I believe most readers will be disposed to concur with Dr. Blaney, but I much doubt if they will be inclined to agree with him in supposing, not only, as before, that Josiah was a goldsmith, but, that he not being at home, when Joshua and his companions came to his house, his bro-

But if Josiah be refused admission into the text, the substitution of Heldai for Helem will be equally useless as unwarranted; for while the difficulty will still remain with little abatement, the proposed alteration, which is rejected, will condemn that, which is admitted. Amid the consent of all the manuscripts and of all the ancient versions, with the printed Hebrew text, the reading of the Syriac version may with great reason be deemed a mere conjecture of its author, made to get rid of a supposed difficulty. I call it only a supposed difficulty, because by the translation of the tenth verse above given, we avoid not only all necessity, but every plausible pretence, for altering, or desiring to alter, the original text in this place. Helem and Hen are plainly those two individuals of the houses of Heldai and Zephaniah, who are patronymically mentioned in the tenth verse; and considering that, it seems highly probable that Tobijah and Jedaiah also are not the very individuals named in the tenth verse, but two others, descendants of theirs, and bearing the same names, as those ancestors, of whose houses they are said to be. The four persons here

ther Hen, who must be supposed equally skilled in the same craft, wrought the crowns, at the order of Joshua, and is therefore named as setting up a memorial in the temple of the Lord.

named, it cannot be doubted, were priests; and, if we take into consideration the circumstances, in which Joshua appears in the fourth scene of the vision, the great probability is, that they are the very persons, who are there alluded to, as his fellows, sitting before him, and who are summoned to attend, as being men of sign. 15, "So they that are afar off shall come and shall build into the temple of Jehovah."

The fourteenth verse is in the nature of a parenthesis, and therefore the subject, broken off at the end of the thirteenth, is here resumed. The counsel of peace being agreed to and firmly established between Jews and Gentiles, they shall co-operate in promoting their common welfare and the glory of their common Lord. So, or accordingly, they, that formerly, as St. Paul also expresses it*, "were afar off, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise," shall come in, with all their fulness, and shall renew on a more extensive scale the scene, which was enacted at the first publication of the gospel to the heathen. They shall build into the temple of Jehovah;—not *in*—but *into*—they shall build themselves into the spiritual house of God; according to the figurative, but emphatic expression of St. Peter;

* Ephesians, ii. 12, 17.

"to whom," that is to the Lord Jesus, "coming, as unto a living stone, ye also as living stones, are built up, a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

"And ye shall know, that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you. Yea, it shall come to pass, when ye shall attentively hearken unto the voice of Jehovah, your God."

The vision properly so called and its symbols, let it be once more noticed, ended with the eighth verse. Consequently the last prediction was not delivered by the instrumentality of the interpreting angel, for whose attendance there was no longer any occasion; but by the immediate revelation of the word of God, as we learn from the ninth verse. When these things are coming to pass, then "ye Jews, who once despised, disowned, and rejected me, shall at length seek the Lord your God and David your King*." Ye shall then know and acknowledge that Jehovah Sabaoth, the Father Almighty, sent me to your forefathers with the glad tidings of salvation, to be your high-priest and king. This happy and glorious change will certainly come to pass, when instead of attending to the false glosses and

* Hosea, iii. 5, Jeremiah, xxx. 9, and compare Ezekiel, xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 22, 24.

misinterpretations, the fables and dreams, of your elders and rabbis, you shall apply your hearts to the divine oracles and attentively hearken to the voice of Jehovah, your God. Dr. Blaney agrees with other commentators in the application of this concluding prediction to the conversion of the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles; but he considers the pronoun of the first person, as referring to Zechariah, and not to the word of God; although the prophet expressly declares, that the word of Jehovah came unto him, and affords not the least hint, that the divine oracle is concluded, or the person of the speaker changed. But on this subject enough has been said before. The following is, with that exception, his satisfactory note on the latter clause of the fifteenth verse. "As the foregoing words respect the conversion of the Gentiles; so do these both the unbelief and conversion of the Jews, of whom it is said, that they will then be assured of the truth of the prophet's mission, when they should be disposed to hearken to the divine call. This clearly implies, that such a disposition would not always be found in them, and of course they would remain for a while in ignorance and unbelief, till it should please God at length to give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. Compare Rom. xi, 25, 26."

There is evidently great fulness of meaning and force of emphasis in the assertion; "Yea, it shall be, or shall come to pass." It is a summary repetition of the preceding declaration, that the Jews shall be convinced of the divine mission of the Branch, when with hearing they shall hear the voice of Jehovah their God, speaking in both his dispensations; when they shall sincerely, without prejudice, without misguidance, with deep and awful seriousness, meditate upon the sacred oracles, of which they have for so many ages had the custody, comparing them with those brighter truths, in the new testament, by which they are illustrated, accomplished, and verified. And this will be, "when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved." *Amen* and *Amen*.

THE END.

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2. The second part of the document focuses on the implementation of the proposed changes. It details the steps involved in the process, from the initial planning stage to the final execution. The author highlights the challenges faced during the implementation and provides solutions to overcome them. The text also discusses the role of the management team in ensuring the successful completion of the project.

3. The third part of the document presents the results of the study. It includes a detailed analysis of the data collected, showing the impact of the proposed changes on the organization's performance. The author compares the results with the initial objectives and provides a clear conclusion on the effectiveness of the changes. The text also discusses the implications of the findings for future research and practice.

4. The fourth part of the document provides a summary of the key findings and conclusions. It reiterates the importance of accurate record-keeping and the successful implementation of the proposed changes. The author also provides recommendations for further research and practice, based on the findings of the study. The text concludes with a statement of appreciation for the support and assistance provided by the management team and the research team.

ERRORS TO BE CORRECTED.

- PAGE XI, Translation, line 16, for "THIS IS WICKEDNESS" read, "THIS IS THE WICKEDNESS."
 2, line 17, for "commence" read, carry on.
 15, line 11, for "in some manner was" read, was in some manner.
 18, Note, line 1, for "9" read, 7.
 22, line 19, for "principle" read, principal.
 31, Note, line 2, for "κπ" read, κπ.
 44, line 23, dele "it."
 45, line 17, for "for" read, and.
 48, last line, for "at" read, of.
 59, line 2, for "10" read, 13.
 98, line 6, for "where" read, were.
 108, line 12, for "one line" read, two short lines.
 113, line 9, for "people" read, peoples.
 115, Note, line 8, for "elementir" read, elementer.
 140, Note, line 16, for "Schroeder's" read, Schroeder's.
 186, Note, line 2, for "Now" read, For.
 190, Note, line 15, after "called" put a comma.
 200, line 19, after "is" insert, here.
 line 23, dele "so."
 210, line 11, for "principal" read, principle.
 329, line 6, for "This is wickedness" read, This is the wickedness.
 231, line 8, after "oil" put a comma.
 line 15, after "Zerubbabel" insert, saying.
 262, line 9, for "principal" read, principle.
 340, line 8, "Yet" should begin a new paragraph.
 342, line 1, for "her" read, their.
 371, last line but one, for "a" read, an.
 378, line 19, before "476" dele, of.
 379, line 11, dele "then."
 414, last line, for "form" read, force.
 455, Note, line 8, for "repealing" read, repeating.



